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A YEAR OF CHILDREN'S SERMONS

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By

JOSEPH ANDERSON SCHOFIELD, Jr.

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A YEAR OF CHILDREN'S SERMONS
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To

THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
HOBART, NEW YORK
AND TO
THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF GOUVERNEUR, NEW YORK
WHO LISTENED ATTENTIVELY TO THESE SERMONS
AND CAME BACK FOR MORE
THIS BOOK
IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

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PREFACE

It has been well said that preaching to children is an art. But it is an art that can be acquired. More than that, it is also a joy, for children are so frank, so open-minded, so responsive. Every minister should acquire the art and experience the joy.

But while acquiring the art and experiencing the joy, he will learn several things. He will learn that he can often talk to the adults in the children's sermon and make both the children and the adults like it. Frequently, he can speak to the children on matters that the adults need advice upon but which he cannot give in the regular sermon. But he must use caution never to prostitute his children's sermon to the purpose of talking through it exclusively to the children's elders. Let him speak plainly to the children. Let him address his sermon directly to them. Let him make it distinctly their part of the service.

He will also learn, to his intense satisfaction, that children, even the smallest, can understand the gospel. They know they are sinners. They know they need salvation. They can understand the death of Christ as a substitution for themselves. And no minister need tone down the gospel to make it fit the child mind. Let him present it in its fullness, its purity, and its power, and the child will understand and the child will respond.

The sermons in this volume are all real sermons, and all have been preached to children. Some were delivered

in the Presbyterian Church of Hobart, N. Y., where the author was pastor from 1925 to 1930. Others were preached in the First Presbyterian Church of Gouverneur, N. Y., where the author has been pastor from 1930 to the present time. Many of them have been given in both places, and many have been repeated to other children in other places as occasion suggested. All of them can be adapted easily to local conditions and suited to local congregations. Where objects have been used, I have chosen the simplest and commonest.

I hope these sermons may be found useful by other ministers, by parents for telling and reading to their children, and by teachers and superintendents of Sunday schools, Weekday Church Schools, and Daily Vacation Bible Schools. I send them forth with the prayer that God may use them to further the proclamation of the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

J. A. S., Jr.

Gouverneur, N. Y.
January 1, 1938.

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CHAPTER I

THE ECHO

Proverbs 15: 1—"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."

How many of you boys and girls know what an echo is? Put up your hands. Don't any more of you know? Did you ever hear the walls of a great empty room talk back to you when you called out in it; or the trees of the forest, or the hills calls back your name when you shouted it outdoors? You call out, "Hello," and soon there comes back to you, faintly but plainly, "Hello." That is an echo! Now, how many of you know? That's fine.

Well, I want to tell you a story or two, that I have heard, about the echo. Once there were some men out in the woods; and one man said that he wanted them all to listen to the wonderful echo, that was to be found in that part of the country. So he shouted, "Hello," just as loudly as he could; and after a long, long time (it must have been almost five minutes, according to the story) the sound came back through the woods; and the echo said to them, faintly, but plainly, "Hello." Well, it was a wonderful echo, for it was so plain and it took so very long to come back to them. But one of the men in the company said that he did not think that that was so very remarkable. He knew a place where the echo was much

more wonderful than that. He lived 'way out west somewhere, probably in the Rocky Mountains. And near his home was a place in the mountains where he and his friends went camping. And here, there was the most marvelous echo in all the world. For the voice that was called out came back so very loud; and, besides that, it took so very, very long to come back. "Why," he said, "when we go to bed at night, we simply open the window toward the mountain, and shout with all our might, 'It's time to get up'; and the next morning the echo comes back and wakes us up."

Now, I really do not think that that was a true story. But the echo is a wonderful thing just the same. And the most wonderful thing about it is that it always says to us exactly what we say to it. If we shout our name, our name comes back to us. If we say, "Hello," the echo says, "Hello," back to us. If we shout out, "John," the echo does not answer back, "Charles," or "Mary." If we cry out, "Hello," the echo never answers, "How do you do?" It always tells us just exactly what we say.

I once heard a story of a boy lost in the woods. When it began to get dark and he was afraid he would not be able to find his way out, he was frightened and began to shout for help. He yelled, "Hello," as loudly as he could. And he was very much surprised to hear a voice call back to him, "Hello." So he thought somebody else was in the woods and heard him. With great joy he called, "Where are you?" and the voice came back to him, "Where are you?" He shouted, "I am here," and the voice said, "I

am here." "Where?" he called, and the voice called back, "Where?" "Here," he shouted for all his life, and the same voice called back, "Here." Now he began to think that the other person was making fun of him and he cried out, "What did you say?" and the voice came back to him, "What did you say?" And at last the truth dawned upon him. He was hearing his own echo all the time. It was saying to him exactly what he was saying to it. It was not another boy at all but his own voice that he had been hearing. The story went on to say that the boy was found after a while. But the point of it was that the echo always says exactly what is said to it.

And that is the way it is with life. The things that we say and the things that we do are just the things that come back to us, the things that are said to us, and the things that are done to us. Let us always remember that. If we say pleasant things and do pleasant things to other people, pleasant things will come back to us. If the things that we say and do are mean and disagreeable, mean and disagreeable things will be said and done to us. If we say untrue things or do untrue things, untrue things will come back to us. That is what our text means. Proverbs 15: 1, "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." I hope you will always remember this text, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." If we speak kindly and softly, other people will not be angry and full of wrath. "But grievous words stir up anger." If we say angry and mean words, they stir up trouble and disagreeableness in others.

CHAPTER II

NAMES

Proverbs 22: 1—"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."

Our text today, boys and girls, is taken from God's Word as it is written in the Book of Proverbs, the twenty-second chapter and a part of the first verse: "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." That is an important text which I trust you will all remember. This morning I want to talk to you about names.

Now we all have names, don't we? Did you ever stop to think that your name is very different from the name of the little boy who lives next door or the girl who lives across the street? Why are names different? What do they mean? Now I am not talking about your first or given names this morning. I do not mean John and Henry and Jane and Gladys. I am speaking about your last or family names. You know that everybody in one family has the same last name. You know it is your father's name and he got it from his father and he got it from his father and so on and on. Did you ever think of that? But somebody, many, many years ago, perhaps, first of all was called by that name, for some reason, and the family has ever since gone by it. But the question now is, how

did that person, 'way back in the past, a long, long time ago, ever get the name in the first place? What does the name mean? Why did he get that name instead of some other?

Now almost all our names of families have a meaning or at least once had a meaning. And one way that people used to get names was from their occupations. Their businesses or the things that they did gave them their names. Now suppose there once were two Johns in the same town. There may be two Johns in your class at school. And for people to keep the two Johns apart they would call one John the Carpenter, and the other John the Baker. One was the carpenter of the town and the other made the bread. So everybody spoke of John the Carpenter until his occupation became a part of his name and they began to call him John Carpenter. And his son was also called by the same name, and so the name Carpenter became the name of the whole family and maybe has stuck to it ever since.

And the family of the man who made the bread for the town was called Baker. And the blacksmith's family took the name of Smith. And the family of the man who made barrels was called Cooper, because Cooper means barrel-maker. So that's the way many names began.

But some names began not from what the men did but from the places where the families lived. Thus there might be William Waters, the William who lived down by the river. And there was Samuel Hill, the man who lived by the hill. In just this way many names began. There is Underhill, the family that lived at the bottom of the

hill, or under the brow of it. And Overstreet, the family who lived across the road. And Schofield, my own name, was probably given to the family that lived in the field next to the school, for the name was once spelled Schoolfield. You have all heard of the great German general during the World War, who later became President of Germany, von Hindenburg. His family got their name from the town or place called Hindenburg, for the German word "von" means "from."

Other people received their names from what they looked like. There was a King in England who was called Rufus, which means Red, because he had a red beard. And the pale man was called White; and a man of dark skin and hair was called Brown; and the tall man was called Long.

Still other people received their names from their fathers. Each one would be called the "son of so and so." Thus somebody was called the Son of John, or Johnson. Another would be called MacDonald, the son of Donald; for "Mac" means "son of" in Scotland. And still another, O'Donnell; for the "O" means "son of" in Ireland.

Now at first everybody had his own name and his name was to separate him from everybody else. But it soon became too confusing to name each person by a different last name, and so all in one family would keep the same name; and that is how it happens that now the name belongs to every member of a family. We each have a last name, a family name. Let us make sure we are worthy of the names that we have, the family names that we have re-

ceived from our fathers. I read a short time ago that the son of Joseph Conrad, the famous English author, got himself into some serious trouble and was put in prison. He dishonored, by his evil acts, the splendid name of his famous father. And I have heard of other people who have done other things that hurt the names of their families. I have heard of people who have been ashamed of their family names and who would not use them. Let us be proud of the names that we possess and let us do nothing that would dishonor them. Let us be worthy of the names that we receive from our fathers, that our families will never be ashamed of us.

But I want to tell you of another name, that we all can have and all ought to have, that is a far better name even than our family names, fine and honorable as they may be. I mean the name "Christian." Every believer in Christ, every one who loves him, can be called by his name, that name which is above every name, the most glorious name in all the world. We can be called by his name, the name of Christ. We can be called Christians. Let us be very proud of this name. Let us be entirely worthy of it. Let us do things and say things only that will make this name good and not bad. Let us do nothing that will hurt this wonderful name of Christ. Let us not lie, or cheat or be mean or be unpleasant. Let us be careful to honor this name that is above every name, the name of God's Son, Himself, and the name that can also be given to us.

CHAPTER III

FLOWERS TURN THEIR FACES TO THE LIGHT[1]

Malachi 4: 2—"The Sun of righteousness."
Object—Any garden flower or a bowl of flowers.

FLOWERS turn their faces to the light! Did you ever notice that? It is true; and it is a most wonderful thing. If you have never noticed it, you ought to do so. The next time you pass a flower garden or a window box or a flower bed in the middle of a green lawn, just notice how the flowers turn their faces to look toward the sun. You will notice it especially, I think, in the great yellow flower we call the Sunflower. I suppose it takes its name from the fact that it so plainly and noticeably turns its face to look at the sun. In the morning it faces the east, for there the sun rises. But as the day advances it lifts up its head to gaze in adoration at the sun and follows it across the sky until toward evening it droops its head toward the west, still looking at the great source of light in the heavens. But other flowers do it too, although you cannot notice it quite so plainly oftentimes in them. But

[1] The suggestions back of Chapters III, XV, and XIX came to me from my wife, Mary Lewis Schofield, to whom I give heartfelt thanks, and, at the same time, acknowledge the many great services she has rendered me in the preparation of this volume.

just watch a garden and see if it is not always true that, in so far as they can, flowers turn to face the light.

But I think sometimes you can notice it even more with flowers that are growing in flower pots inside the house. If your mother has a pot of flowers growing in one of her windows, just notice it the next time you are near it; and I think you will be surprised by the fact that the flowers all turn their faces toward the glass of the window, for there they get the light, there is the sun. And that is why your mother has to turn the pot around every so often, for all the blossoms look out the window and none of them faces the inside of the room, and the plant begins to grow one-sided. For the lovely blossoms have all turned their faces toward the light. And after your mother turns the pot around, the flowers will slowly—O, so slowly that you cannot see them do it—turn themselves again and after a few days they will all be facing the window once more; and your mother will have to turn the pot around again to see the blossoms at all.

But, boys and girls, you can notice this wonderful thing even with flowers that are cut and are placed in vases inside a room. The other day there was a beautiful bowl of pansies on my desk. Mrs. Schofield had placed them there, and she had their smiling faces turned toward me, so that I could see and enjoy their beauty. Now my desk is far from the window, but I noticed after several hours that those pansies were gradually turning their heads toward the light of the window. We also had in the house a great bowl of nasturtiums, on the dining table,

far from the window. But those flowers sought the light; and after a while all their heads, though the blooms were cut off from the vines, were turned toward the windows so that their faces might seek the light.

Now the Bible, in Malachi 4: 2, calls Jesus Christ, our Saviour, "the Sun of righteousness"; and just as flowers turn their faces to the sun in the sky, so human beings, men and women and boys and girls, should look to this Sun of Righteousness. For Christ Jesus is just as important to men as the physical sun in the sky is to flowers. Flowers must have light and warmth to live and grow. Men must have spiritual light and spiritual warmth to live the right kind of lives, and to grow spiritually. And it is just as natural for men to look to Jesus, who called himself, you remember, in the New Testament, the "Light of the World," as it is for flowers to turn to the sun. People will do that naturally, if they do not let anything interfere with their look. If you place a screen or pull a window shade between the flower and the light, of course the flower cannot turn toward it. If they let sin of any kind interfere, men cannot turn toward the Light of the World. But with interference removed, men will turn to Jesus.

Let us never be ashamed of the things we do or say or think so that we cannot turn to Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the World. That is, let us never allow sin to interfere with our turning our faces to him. For he gives us life, as the sun gives life to the flowers. He will help us and encourage us. He is the source of the light of the soul. He is the Sun of Righteousness.

CHAPTER IV

THE ALARM CLOCK

Object—An alarm clock that may be allowed to ring during the talk.

I AM sure that you all have seen and you all have heard something similar to the thing that I hold in my hand this morning. It is an alarm clock, that can be set at night to ring in the morning when it is time to get up. You all know how it works. Many a morning, when it is time to get up and get ready for school, you hear the little, shrill voice of an alarm clock and you know you had better hurry and dress and get down to breakfast. The little voice rings out and cries just as plainly as if it could speak the words, "It's time to get up." But did you know that many people, when they hear the alarm clock ring, just reach out and shut it off? Then they can roll over again and go to sleep!

Now I want to suggest to you boys and girls this morning that we all have something inside us that is very much like an alarm clock. It is a tiny little voice within our hearts that will ring out with a shrill alarm at certain times. Our parents and our teachers call it by a big name, conscience. I am sure you have all heard it call. Whenever you do something that is wrong, something that you know you should not do, do you not hear this

little voice in your heart cry out to you and tell you that you should not do that thing? Whenever we do wrong or want to do wrong, this little voice of conscience rings out to us and tells us that we should not do it. And whenever we do not want to do right, the same voice cries out to us and tells us that we ought to do the thing that we don't want to. And very often, you know, that happens. There are a good many times when we know perfectly well that we ought to do a certain thing. Maybe it is an errand for Father or something around the house for Mother. We know we ought to do it, but we just don't want to. Then it is that the little voice within us speaks right up and tells us that we must. So you see it speaks to us both times, when we do wrong and when we do not want to do right.

I have said that our parents call this little voice conscience. That is the name for it, but we know that really it is God speaking to us. That is the way God tells us when we have done wrong and that is the way God tells us when we ought to do right. It is really the voice of God. It is the way God speaks to us, right to our hearts.

But you know I told you that many people, when the alarm clock rings, reach out and shut it off and then turn over and go to sleep again. Now that is the way it often is with conscience or the voice of God in our hearts. Many people reach right out and shut off this voice, just as they turn off the alarm clock. And when they shut off conscience, they turn right around and do the

thing that conscience was trying to tell them not to. And don't you see that this is a very bad thing to do? For the person who shuts off the alarm clock every morning, and goes back to sleep, soon gets to the point where he does not hear the bell at all when it rings. And the person who shuts off conscience will soon get to the point where he will no longer hear it when it speaks.

And so, boys and girls, I want to tell you never to shut off conscience. Always listen to it when it speaks to you. Always heed its advice. Always listen to its warning. For it is the voice of God. And if you start the bad habit of shutting off the voice of God, soon you will get so that you no longer will hear it at all.

CHAPTER V

THE SNOW

Isaiah 1: 18—"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

TODAY, boys and girls, I want to talk to you about the snow. It is a good subject to speak of just now, for there is so much of the beautiful, white, fluffy substance all over the ground at this time of year. But before I speak about the snow, I should like to read to you a text. It is found in Isaiah 1: 18. You know Isaiah is in the Old Testament and I hope you will all be able to find this verse when you get home. This is what it says in part of that verse: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

I

Now the first thing I want to tell you is a story about a little boy I knew. One day in the late fall he saw a snowstorm for the first time that he could remember. Now he was a very small boy and had seen snow in the winter before, but he was then too young to remember it. And so one day he looked out the window and saw the soft, thick, heavy snowflakes all through the air. And it was the first time he had ever noticed such a sight. And so he came running to his mother and cried, "Mother, mother, come quickly and look. I never saw so much

smoke in all my life." He thought the snow in the air was smoke! Doesn't that seem strange to us? But it shows us that often children make mistakes. Boys and girls do not know all things. Let us remember that and let us remember that there are some things that we do not understand at all but which our parents do. There are many things that our fathers and mothers know that we do not know. That is not strange. Let us remember it. And there are some things that only God knows. So let us never be too sure of ourselves and let us trust our parents, who know so much more than we do; and most of all let us trust God, who knows most of all.

II

But there is another thing that I want to tell you about the snow. It is beautiful when it comes down through the air and first lies upon the ground. Do you know anything more beautiful than this fluffy snow falling through the air? But it does not stay white and beautiful very long, does it? After it gets to the earth, it soon gets dirty. People step on it. Smoke and soot fall upon it. Dogs and cats and boys and girls run all over it. And very soon it becomes very black and dirty. The earth has blackened it.

And it is a sad thing that that is the way it is with us, with boys and girls and with men and women. We are pure and beautiful when we come from God. But the earth blackens us. After we have been on the earth awhile, we get black and dirty; we do wrong and commit

sins; we make mistakes and do that which is not right. We get sinful. We get black. And it is the earth that blackens us.

III

Now there is still another thing about snow that is very interesting, I think. And that is that snow is soon gone. It disappears. It does not stay upon the earth. It melts and runs away and is gone forever. I remember a story of a little boy who made a giant snowball as big as himself and decided he wanted to keep it forever. So he rolled it into the house and rolled it up before the great open fire and pushed it upon the fireplace hearth. In a few minutes he came back to look at it and to see how wonderful a thing it was. And it was gone! Nothing left but a great pool of water on the bricks in front of the blazing fire. Snow does not stay upon the earth. Snow goes. Snow disappears. But we do not. We live forever. FOREVER! We are not like snow in this. There never will be a time when we do not live, either in this world or in the next.

And that brings us to the end and to our text. We have just said that snow gets black and people get black with sin. Snow disappears, but we live on. But we do not have to live on, stained and dirty and blackened by sin. For God himself will make us clean again. That is exactly what our text means. Though the world has made us black and dirty with sin, if we have faith God will forgive us and cleanse us and make us white and pure again. "Though your sins be as scarlet," or, we might say, black and dirty, "they shall be as white as snow."

CHAPTER VI

LOLLIPOPS [1]

Object—A lollipop, or candy sucker, or better, a quantity of them to give to the children after the service.

Boys and girls, how many of you know what I hold in my hand? Ah, I am glad to see that you all do. Yes, it is a lollipop. And after the service this morning you will find that the ushers have a number of them and they will give one to each boy and girl who is here in church.

Now I want to tell you a story about lollipops. It is a story I read in a newspaper when I was in Florida one winter. It was a story about "Little Benny," a boy whose name is often in the newspapers and I suppose many of you have heard of him. Well, Benny had to go on an errand for his mother. And, like all boys do, he thought he would like another boy to go with him. So he went over to Puds Simkins's house and asked him to go along. "Like fun," Puds said. You know, boys often say that they will not do a thing for another boy, and then go and do it. Well, that is just what Puds did, for he went with Benny just the same, even though he said he would not.

Well, Benny's errand took them to the drugstore, and

[1] This chapter was suggested by "Little Benny," a syndicated article by Lee Pape, appearing in the Orlando (Fla.) *Morning Sentinel.* Permission from the author has been obtained for its use here and thanks are hereby given.

when they went in, Mr. White, the druggist, with his kindest smile, said, "Well, boys?" You know how the drugstore man would talk to two nice, bright boys. But Puds said nothing, for it wasn't his errand that they had come on. And Benny also said nothing, for he couldn't think what it was his mother sent him for. But after a long pause, Benny said, "I just can't remember what it was I was to get."

Just then Puds thought that he would be helpful, so he spoke up and said, "Maybe it was lime drops your mother wanted"; and Puds began to cough and cough as if he had a bad cold and would really like some lime drops himself. "Or maybe it was some hard gumdrops." Puds liked hard gumdrops very much. And because he wanted some, he of course thought that maybe Benny's mother also wanted some and maybe it was that that she had sent Benny to get. But still Benny couldn't think.

Now Mr. White spoke up, "Was it iodine, tooth paste, cleaner for kid shoes?"

"I'll tell you what it was," shouted Puds, "I'll bet it was lollipops." He had just seen some awfully good-looking ones in the showcase. "Prob'ly she wanted you to get a dozen lollipops. Why not get 'em anyhow. Prob'ly that was what she wanted, and anyhow she may let you keep 'em when you get 'em home."

"Was it ink or sticking plaster or absorbent cotton?" said Mr. White, trying to be helpful and hoping that Benny would remember.

But Puds thought of something else. "Maybe it was spice drops, or chewing gum or peppermints."

"Now I remember what it was," Benny shouted. "I know. It wasn't the drugstore I was supposed to go to. It was the hardware store, and I was sent for carpet tacks."

Why did I tell you this story, boys and girls? For two reasons. First, if you are going to help another person, be sure you are really helping him or stop trying. Just wait until he is through. When you are going to help another boy or girl, be sure you are helping and not hindering. Puds pretended to be helping Benny go on his errand, but he was only hindering him by making so many foolish suggestions and asking him to buy things that he should have known that his mother had not sent for.

And the second reason for telling the story is this: We often think a thing is right because we *want* it. But that does not make it right. Puds wanted some lollipops, but his wanting them did not make them what Benny's mother sent him to get. It is like the little boy who prayed one night on going to bed that God might make Chicago the capital of Massachusetts. "Why did you ever pray for such a thing as that?" his mother asked him when his prayer was over. "Why, because that is what I said in my examination in geography today." Our wanting something does not make it right. Let us always try to WANT the right things.

CHAPTER VII

RUTS

Isaiah 30: 21—"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it."

JUST the other day I found it necessary to drive to Ogdensburg. Now it had been snowing very hard for several days and the road was covered with a thick layer of snow. And because people had to drive over that road just the same, the snow had been packed down tightly in many places by their cars and there had been deep ruts worn in the tightly packed snow. These ruts were very deep and their sides were very slippery. And it was almost impossible for me to turn the wheels of my car out of them, whenever I wanted to pass another car or to turn a corner. Indeed in some places the ruts were so deep and their sides so slippery that I couldn't get out of them at all for a long way; and when I wanted to pass another car and move out of the middle of the road, I had to back up a great distance before I could ever get out. You have all seen ruts. You have all ridden in an automobile when it got into ruts worn in the snow in the winter or in the mud in the spring. Now ruts are interesting things. There is much to be said about them that is bad. But there is also something that can be said for them that is good.

RUTS

I

First, then, there are some bad points about ruts, whether they are in the snow or in the mud. Now one of these bad things is that it is very hard to get out of a rut when you want to. Sometimes you want to get out very badly indeed. Another car is coming toward you and you have to move over in the road and give it room to pass. And sometimes you want to get out very quickly. And if the wheels of your car are running in a deep rut it is very hard to get out, even when you simply *have* to get out. And another bad thing is this: If you are in a rut that leads off the road, and many of them do, you have to follow it and it carries you right off the road, too, and into the ditch. If some big truck ahead of you has slipped off the road and has cut a great rut off into the ditch and your wheels are running in that rut, off you go into the ditch as well!

Now that is the way with habit; for habits are very much like ruts. If we get into a bad habit, we may soon find that we have to follow it where it leads us, whether we want to go that way or not. We can't get out. And a bad habit leads us into all kinds of trouble.

II

But, you know, there are some good points to ruts as well as some bad ones. Very often a rut is a good thing. If the road is very, very slippery, as our roads sometimes are in the winter, and the ruts lead straight along the center of the road and are deep and firm and straight,

then it is a fine thing to have them and many a person is very glad when the wheels of his car stay right in the ruts. The very fact that the ruts are deep and we *can't* get out is sometimes a great protection. For they keep us clear of the ditch. And often they keep the car where it belongs. The wheels are firm in the ruts; the car can't slip out; it cannot skid all over the road.

And that is the way it is with good habits. If we get deeply into a good habit, it is just exactly as hard to get out of it as it is to get out of a bad habit. If we are deep in a good habit, like going to church, like telling the truth, like being friendly, like smiling, like obeying father and mother, it is very hard to slip out of it and it will lead us in the *right* way, and we will follow where it leads us.

Now I think that that is one of the things that the text means that I have selected for you this morning, from the thirtieth chapter of Isaiah and the first part of the twenty-first verse: "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." When we are in the *habit* of listening to God, of walking with God, He will direct us in the way and will keep us from getting off the road.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MIRROR

Object—A hand mirror or any small piece of mirror.

How many of you boys and girls remember when I gave you a talk about the echo? Put up your hands. That is fine. I am glad you all have such good memories. Today, I am going to tell you about the mirror and I am going to try to show you that a mirror is very much like an echo in many ways. I have brought a small mirror with me today that you all may see just exactly what it is I am going to talk about.

But first of all I want to tell you a very famous story, a story that the ancient Greeks used to tell to their boys and girls. It is the story of *Narcissus*. Narcissus was a very handsome young man who used to roam over the fields and through the woods of Greece. One day he came to a beautiful, clear fountain, or spring. He was tired from his hunt and sat down beside the clear, cool pool. Soon, feeling thirsty, he stooped over the water to drink and was surprised to see his own image on the surface of the deep, calm water. Now he had never seen his own image before and of course he did not know that the beautiful face he saw looking up at him out of the water was his own. He thought it was the face of a beautiful water

fairy, who lived in that pool. He gazed and gazed at the lovely face. He tried to kiss it, but when his lips touched the water, the surface of the pool was disturbed by a thousand tiny ripples and the magnificent face vanished. He thought that the fairy, not liking his attentions, sped away into the depth of the fountain. But as soon as the water became calm and smooth again, his gaze beheld that same lovely face and he thought that the fairy had returned to look at him. He plunged his arms in to seize her and draw her to his bosom, but the instant his hands touched the water the face vanished again and the thousand little ripples appeared once more and broke the crystal surface of the water up into a thousand separate pools. But, once more, when the water calmed, the magnificent face reappeared and his constant gaze was fixed upon it. He fell in love with his own face and knew it not. Every time he tried to kiss it or touch it, it disappeared and every time he waited for the pool to calm, it returned. So he just sat on the bank and looked and looked. He couldn't move from that spot, for fear he would lose the lovely vision. So he just sat there day after day and month after month until finally he pined away and turned into a beautiful flower, with a purple center, surrounded by dainty white leaves. And that is the flower that we today call by his name Narcissus.

There is another story I want to tell you. Once upon a time a dog stood before a looking glass and saw his own image within it. Like Narcissus, he did not know that it was himself that he saw. He barked at it and it seemed to

open its great mouth and bark back. He leaped up and it leaped up. He darted toward it and it darted toward him. But, crash! he found that he had dashed into the glass and shattered it into a million pieces.

For, what do you see in the mirror? Why, you always see in the mirror exactly what you place before it. *You.* When you look in the mirror you see yourself. If you stand before it, you see just you. That's all. Narcissus saw only himself. The dog saw only himself. The mirror you look in shows you, *You!*

Now, the world is like a mirror. You smile, and the world smiles back at you. When you look out into the world, you see there exactly what you put out before it. If you frown at the world, the world wears a frown when it looks back at you. If you want to see a smile on the face of the world, you must look at it with a smile. Let us remember Narcissus and the dog and the mirror. And let us remember that the world is like a mirror. For both the echo and the mirror give back to you what you give to them.

CHAPTER IX

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT BULB

Matthew 5: 16—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Object—An electric light bulb.

Our text this morning is from Matthew 5: 16 and I hope you will all look this verse up in your Bibles when you get home and learn it. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." You all know what this object is that I hold in my hand. You have seen many of them. It is an electric light bulb. But you all know that as I hold it here in my hand it will not give any light. By itself it is no good. If it is to light up a room or to beautify a lamp, it must have more to it than just the bare bulb. By itself it is of no use.

There are several things that it must have before it will give any light. First, it must have a socket to hold it. Then it must be attached to some wires. From that socket there must run some wires or we know the bulb will never light. Then some place in the room there must be a switch, by which we can turn the light on and off. But still this is not enough. Even with these things, there

will be no light unless there is some power to come over those wires, to be turned on by that switch, to go through that socket and into this bulb to produce the light. But when we have those four things, our bulb will produce the light that we want.

Now we are like that electric light bulb. Boys and girls and men and women are like that. We are supposed to shine for Jesus. But by ourselves, we can give no light. There is no light in ourselves. There are certain things that we must have before we can shine.

I

Like the bulb, we must have a socket before we can shine for Jesus. The socket is where we are, where we live, where God places us. There is a place for each of us. That place is where God wants us to be. We can call that the socket that is to hold us.

II

But the bulb needed more than just the socket. And we need more than just the place where we are. The bulb needed wires to connect it with the power. So we need something to connect us with the power which will make us lighten up and shine for Christ. The wires that will connect us to the source of power are prayer and the Bible. You notice that there are two. It always requires two wires to carry the electric current into the socket and into the light. So it takes two wires to carry into us the power that will make us shine. One of these

wires is prayer, talking to God. The other wire is the Bible, God's Word for us, God talking to us.

III

To make our bulb shine we needed another thing, the switch. So to make the light of our life shine, we need a switch. The switch turns on the power. So our switch is needed to turn on our power. And how does this switch work? It simply works by using prayer and the Bible. We have them both. If we would turn them on, we must use them. They are no good to us when they are idle. To turn them on, just use them.

IV

And what is the power that will then come into our lives and make us shine for Jesus? The power is God. God Himself will come into us and shine through us. And when He does, just like the electricity coming into the bulb, He will make us shine like the sun, we shall be bright, we shall light up.

Now this is the light, God shining through us, that Jesus told us to let shine before men. Let us keep that light shining and God will be glorified. Our light will glorify God. Our shining for Jesus will bring glory to God. Think what that means, boys and girls. *You* can glorify *God*. Your light, shining before men, can bring brilliance and glory to God Himself. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

CHAPTER X

TWO PLUS TWO

Isaiah 5: 20—"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"

I WANT to speak to the boys and girls today on "Two Plus Two."

The text is found in God's Word as it is written in Isaiah, the fifth chapter and the twentieth verse: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"

The prophet was speaking about those people who call a thing by its opposite. And he called down woe upon those who called evil good, and good evil. Now you know you might call white black, but it would not make it black. That is something that I would like you to think about. You might call white black, if you didn't know any better or if for some reason you wanted to, but that would not change it. And you might get all your friends to call white black. And everybody in this town might begin calling white black and everybody in this whole state might do so, too. And everybody in the whole United States or in the whole world might do the same thing. In-

deed, people might decide to change the names for both black and white. They might turn right around and call white black and black white and use the names for the colors that way. But that would not change the thing itself. White would still be white, no matter what people called it. They could call it black or purple or anything else and it would still be white. Calling it black would not make it black. Not even if everybody in the whole world called it black. If it was white, it would still be white.

And so it is with two plus two. You know it makes four and nothing else. If you have two cents and I give you two cents more, you have four cents, and nothing else. Now you might *say* you had five cents, but that would not make it five. You might even change the names for the numbers and decide that ever after this you would say five when you mean four and say four when you mean five, and so whenever you have four cents in your hand or four apples in your pocket you would call it five. And you might even get everybody else to say the same thing. But that would not make any difference in the *thing* itself. If everybody in the whole world called four five, there would still be just four cents in your hand or four apples in your pocket. All the saying in the world cannot change the thing. Two plus two makes four and nothing else and never can make anything else. And no matter if you called it five or fifty or nine hundred and thirty-one, it would still be four and nothing else. Yes, it would still be four, even if everybody in the whole world called it five.

So it is with evil; and that is what Isaiah, the Prophet, meant in our text. Evil is evil and calling it something else will not make it something else. A lie is wrong, it is a sin. And even if you say it isn't, that won't change it. For it still is evil. To cheat is wrong. To steal is wrong. To be unkind and to be selfish are wrong. These things are evil. They are sins. And no calling them something else by every person in the whole world will make them good. That is the way with all evil. Some people will say that it is not evil at all, but good; but their saying so will not make it good. No, not if everybody in the whole world said so. Evil is evil, and no amount of calling it by another name will make it anything else. And just as you cannot make evil good by calling it good, so you cannot make good into evil by calling it so.

Boys and girls, people will tell you that what you think is wrong is not wrong at all, and will try to get you to do what you know you should not do. Do not listen to them —because you know that, no matter what nice names they give to evil, it is still and forever wrong. And just so people will try to tell you that some things that you *know* are good are really not good at all, and they will try to get you not to do them. But you *know* they are right and you *know* that no calling them evil, even if everybody in the whole world should do it, would make them so. Remember always what the prophet said: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

CHAPTER XI

THE SPECTACLES

Psalm 119: 18—"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Object—A pair of spectacles.

I HAVE in my hand, boys and girls, an object that is familiar to you all. You have seen many people wear such things. Some of your fathers and mothers have to wear them and some of you, yourselves, need them. They are spectacles, or glasses which people wear in front of their eyes to help them to see. Whenever any person has some trouble with his eyes which causes him difficulty in seeing, he has to wear glasses. And it is wonderful how much good can be done by glasses for those who need help to see.

A friend of mine once had to get some new glasses. His old ones did not seem to help him very much, so he went to the oculist and secured a prescription for new ones. Now the old ones never were much good, I fear, for when he got the new ones he told me that he now could see things that he never had been able to see before in all his life. He could see things that he never knew were in the world. Before, he could not recognize his friends on the street until they were very close to him; he could not read signs

on the buildings across the street; he could not see the beauty of the distant hills; he could not see the glorious colors in the flowers; he could not see the beauties of the trees of the forests. But when he got his new glasses, a new world opened before him; he could see all the things that were formerly denied him. He could see the beauty of God's world.

Now as it was with my friend and the beauties of the world about him, so it is with us and the Christian life. For God gives us a kind of spectacles, something that will help us see in the *spiritual* life, just like glasses before our eyes help us see in the physical world. That is to say that God will help us see things that we never saw before we let him help us. He will help us see what He wants us to do. And unless He does help us, unless He gives us spectacles to look through, we would never be able to see the things that He wants us to do for Him.

Again He will help us to see the wonders of His Book. His Book, the Bible, is a wonderful thing. It is just full of glories. But we cannot see them by ourselves. We cannot understand how fine and how glorious and how wonderful His Book is unless He helps us to see. That's what I mean when I say that God must give us glasses to help us see the wonders of His Book. And that is what the Bible itself means when it says in our text, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." This text, that I have selected for you and which I trust you will all learn, is found in Psalm 119 and the eighteenth verse. The writer of the psalm was praying

that God would open his eyes that he might see the wonders of the Book. And that is what God does when He gives us spectacles.

There is another thing that God will help us see, which we cannot see by ourselves, without His spiritual spectacles. That is the joy of following Christ. And there is more joy in following Christ than in anything else in the whole world. Nothing can give us so much real joy as that. But unless God shows this to us we cannot see it. We can see it only through His spectacles.

And finally, another thing we can see through these spiritual spectacles which we cannot see otherwise, is the *fun* of doing right. Did you boys and girls know that it is really much more fun to do the right than to do the wrong? It is really lots of fun to know you are doing just what is right. But many boys and girls cannot see this. They think it is more fun to do wrong. That is because they cannot see. They do not look through God's spectacles.

Let us pray that God will help our eyes, will give us His spectacles to see these things that we cannot see unless He helps us. Then we shall see what He wants us to do. Then we shall behold the wonders of His Book. Then we shall see the joy of following Christ. Then we shall know the fun of doing right.

CHAPTER XII

SOAP

Matthew 16: 25—"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Object—A cake of yellow kitchen soap.

I HAVE brought with me today to show to you a cake of soap, just a cake of ordinary, yellow kitchen soap. For that is what I want to talk to you about, SOAP.

Now you know that soap is made for a purpose. Every cake of it is made to do a certain thing. Some soap we use for washing our faces and hands. Some of it we use for washing our clothes. Some kinds of soap men use for shaving. You have all seen your father make a rich, white lather with soap and spread it over his face before he shaves in the morning. Some soap is made for just that purpose. And some is made for a woman's shampoo. You have all seen your mother make great fluffy suds in which to wash her hair.

And soap has some queer uses, too. Did you ever see a carpenter use soap to help him make a screw go into a piece of wood? He will put some soap on the screw to make it more slippery and then with his screw driver he will more easily drive it into the wood with which he is working. But the strangest use I ever saw of soap was to move a house on! Yes, I have seen a whole house

moved on soap! Maybe some of you have, too. In Princeton I used often to see men move a whole house this way. Here is how they did it. They would first very carefully lift the house off its foundation by the use of jackscrews. Then they would place great wooden beams under it and let it down off the screws onto the heavy beams. Now they would take their soap and scrape it thickly over the beams which would then be used as tracks. Next they would attach a rope to the house and run it through a set of pulleys and up to a sort of machine that looks like a big wooden spool, standing on end, on which the rope is wound. This spool is turned around by a horse, hitched to a stick that is attached to the top. As the horse goes round and round, the rope winds up on the spool and the house slides along the beam-tracks which have been thoroughly soaped. So the entire house moves on soap!

I once heard a story about a wrong use of soap. One cold day a man came home from his work and sat down, very hungry, to his dinner. The first thing his wife served him was some queer looking liquid in a flat saucer. He tasted it and thought that it was very peculiar. He tried to swallow it and found that it choked him. He tried to spit it out, but found that great bubbles began pouring out of his mouth. Coughing and choking, he cried to his wife to ask her what this was she had served him to eat. "Why, it is a new kind of soup," she told him; "I got the recipe out of the paper." "Do you call this stuff soup?" he cried. "Something must be wrong. This can't be soup. Let me see the recipe." And she brought him

the paper and said, "Here it is as plain as day, s-o-a-p, soup."

That was one place where soap was being used for a purpose that it was never intended for. But when rightly used, soap has a purpose and it does its work well. We should be like soap in this respect. We should do what we are fitted for. God has a use for each one of us; He has put us here in the earth to perform that duty and to carry out that purpose. Let us make sure that we, like soap, do the thing that we are fitted for and that God expects us to do.

And there is another very interesting thing about soap. As you use it, it wears away. It is used up as it serves. As it serves, it gives itself away and after a while there is none of it left. As we serve God, we too give of ourselves. But here we are very different from soap. Because, while soap wears away as it serves others, we become better and bigger, stronger and more useful the more we give of ourselves. The more we do the stronger we are. The more of ourselves we give to others, especially to God, the better and bigger we become. That is what Jesus meant when he told the disciples in Matthew 16: 25, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." If we are selfish and think only of ourselves, our lives will be useless. But if we give of ourselves, if we lose our lives for Christ by giving of them to those who need us, if we serve, then we shall find our lives. We shall be bigger and better and stronger.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SPIDER

A FEW days ago I had to go down into my cellar. As I went down the stairway, I saw something dart across the steps ahead of me. It went almost like lightning, but it was dark and small. I wondered what it was, but it went so fast that I could not see. So I went on down the steps. The next time I had to go to the cellar, the same thing happened. In front of me, something darted across the steps so fast that I could not even tell what it was. It seemed like a shadow, but it moved so fast and was gone so soon that I knew it could not be a shadow. And so I watched carefully every time I had to go down those steps to see if I could discover what it was. And at last I found out that it was a spider. He was weaving his web across my cellar steps, and just as soon as he heard my footsteps on the stairs above him, he would dart into shelter, because I suppose he was afraid of the great, big, unknown thing that started noisily down the steps.

I watched him to see what he would do, because I was interested. But do you know, he soon began to do a very strange thing? After I had gone down and up those stairs a few times, he began to get used to me. I had never chased him or tried to kill him, and I suppose he thought that I never would. And so he did not move when he heard me coming. He no longer darted off into a corner for shelter. Instead, he stayed right there, sitting

on his great web that stretched across the steps and I had to walk around him every time!

Now you see what a strange thing that was for him to do. For the danger that he faced was greater after I knew what he was and where he stayed than before. I no longer thought he was just a shadow that darted across my path. Now I knew that he was a spider who had no right in my house and ought to be killed. I knew just what he was and just where he was and it was therefore so much easier for me to kill him than ever before. But you see he had become so used to me, that he no longer was afraid. He just stayed in his place, although the danger was greater than ever.

And that made me think of an old proverb which came to my mind as I watched this spider. It is the lesson his little life taught. "Familiarity breeds contempt." When we get used to a thing, when we get familiar with it, we no longer fear it. "Familiarity breeds contempt."

For people are very much like spiders in this respect. We don't run from danger when we once get used to it. And when we do get used to it, it may be much greater than it ever was before. Just because we are used to something that is bad for us, we are not to think that it is no longer bad for us. Because we are familiar with some great danger, we are not to think that it is no longer a danger. Because we know it so well, we get careless sometimes, and are no longer on our guard, and this may make the danger greater than ever. Let us remember that and not be like the foolish, silly spider.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SPIDER AND THE GRASSHOPPER

LAST week I told you about the spider that lived on my cellar steps. Today I want to tell you about the Spider and the Grasshopper. And this happened on the same cellar steps. Now it happened that one day, as I went down those steps, I saw a grasshopper caught in the spider's web. He had only been there a few minutes, I am sure, for he was struggling hard to get out and was still fresh and strong as if he had not been struggling long. I watched him to see what he would do and I also watched the spider to see what he would do. The spider stood far off, 'way over on one side of the web, to observe the poor grasshopper who had been caught. The spider seemed intent on seeing every move of his poor unfortunate victim, and I am sure he thought that he would soon have a fine meal of the nice, fat grasshopper. The grasshopper, realizing that he was caught in the web, tried his best to get out. He struggled and he jumped and he squirmed and he kicked. But the more he struggled, the deeper he went into the web and the tighter he became entangled.

Now I felt very sorry for the poor grasshopper whom the spider intended to eat. I saw no reason why the spider should have him. The grasshopper had never done anything against the spider. The spider had no right to him. The spider had no business to catch him and eat

him. And so I decided to let the poor, trapped grasshopper go. Stooping down to the step over which was spun the thick web of the spider, I carefully pulled the strands of the webbing away and released the poor grasshopper. Full of joy at his release, the grasshopper began jumping about and I went on my way down the stairs.

But on my way up again, what do you think I found? The poor, foolish grasshopper was right in the middle of the web again! The silly little thing, after he was set free, turned around and deliberately jumped right back into the net once more. And along came the spider and ate him up. For the next time I passed down those stairs, there was only half of the grasshopper left! And the next time I came down that way, there was none of him left! Wasn't that a silly, foolish grasshopper to jump right back into the trap from which he had been just set free and to lose his life for being so foolish?

But we are like that ourselves, don't you think, very often? God gets us out of trouble, sometimes, and we jump right back. When we do that, we have no more sense than that silly grasshopper who jumped right back into the web and into death. Very often experience does not teach us at all, as it is supposed to. For we often go into things that we *know* from our own experience or from that of others will hurt us. Is this not true? Do we not often jump into such things, that we are perfectly sure are bad for us? And whenever we do so, are we not as foolish and as silly as the grasshopper who jumped right back into the web from which he had been released?

CHAPTER XV

EASTER EGGS

Matthew 28: 2—"And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it."

Objects—A quantity of chocolate-covered Easter Eggs, wrapped in gaily-colored tin foil in an Easter basket, to be distributed to the children at the close of the church service. These eggs can be purchased at any confectionery store or five- and ten-cent store at Easter time.

I WANT to talk about Easter Eggs to the boys and girls this morning—this beautiful, happy Easter morning. But before I tell you about the Easter Eggs, I want to read you a text from God's Word as it is found in the Gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-eighth chapter and the second verse: "And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it."

Why do we have eggs at Easter time? Many people eat eggs on Easter day. And most of us have either colored eggs to hunt or candy eggs to eat. I have a basket of candy eggs with me in the pulpit and every boy and girl in church this morning is to have one of these at the close of the

service. But why should eggs be used at Easter? Why are they a symbol of this happiest and most important festival of the entire year?

I think we use eggs as a symbol of Easter because an egg represents a new life. We all know that a hen lays an egg and that inside that egg is the material which will make a tiny, new chicken when and if it is hatched. The egg is a new life. Within it is a life, locked up, hidden, but there just the same. And when this new life comes forth from the egg, it is like a flower budding, a flower breaking forth from the tight binding of the bud that holds it and springing forth into life. Indeed, spring flowers as well as eggs stand for Easter.

Now I said the egg contained a new life. That new life comes forth when the chicken breaks out of the egg and, so to speak, comes to life. That is to say, the egg comes to life in the chicken! Now think of that for a moment and you will see that it is something like a resurrection. An egg, which seems cold and dead, suddenly comes to life when it is hatched and a lively little chick breaks forth. Something that seemed dead has now come to life.

And notice, also, the manner in which the chick comes to life. He comes to life by breaking the shell that bound him. He breaks his way out into life. He was imprisoned in a tight, binding shell. He breaks it and comes forth and the new life is seen. Exactly so, the flower breaks the bud that binds it and holds it all close and tight. It breaks forth and comes to life.

Now this is not the same as Christ's coming forth from the tomb, but it is something like it. It is not the same, because Christ was really and truly dead and came to life again. But it is something like it, for the egg *seems* dead and the flower *seems* dead and they both break forth and come to life. That is why they are symbols of Easter. That is why they make us think of Easter. That is why they are like Christ's breaking forth from the tomb. They are symbols or illustrations or pictures of Christ's breaking forth from the tomb on the first Easter morning. And after all, that is why we have eggs at Easter time—to remind us of Christ's breaking forth from the tomb that held him after he died for us.

For you know, of course, that Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, man's glorious Saviour, died for our sins on the cross on the day that we call Good Friday. You know all about that, I am sure—how he loved us so much that he willingly gave himself to die for us; how they took him and nailed him to a rough cross stuck up in the ground. This happened on the Friday before Easter, and we call it Good Friday because of the good thing that God's Son did for us on that day. He died instead of us. He died for our sins.

And then, you know, he was buried. His dead body was hastily made ready for burial and it was placed inside a tomb, a sort of little room, carved out of the rock; and then a big stone was rolled over the door of the tomb or tiny rock-hewn room. This was all on Friday. But on Sunday morning, the first Easter morning, he rose again

from the dead, broke forth from that tomb that held his body, and came forth alive. Our text says, you remember, "Behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." And Jesus, who was dead, came forth alive! He who died for our sins, rose again for our justification. Paul tells us that plainly in Romans 4: 25: Christ "was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."

On Friday he was dead and buried in the tomb. On Sunday he came to life again, was raised from the dead, and is alive for evermore. That is the meaning of Easter, and that is why we have eggs at Easter time—to remind us of that glorious fact. Let each child in church this morning take a candy egg as my Easter present to you, and remember always why we have eggs at Easter!

CHAPTER XVI

LETTERS

Proverbs 3: 5—"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart."
Objects—A letter and a postage stamp.

THE text that I want the boys and girls to think about today is found in the Word of God as it is written in the Book of Proverbs, the third chapter and the fifth verse: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." I hope every boy and girl present this morning will look up that text when he gets home, because it is a great text and because you all should learn how to find texts in the Bible.

Now for objects to show you this morning, I have brought with me into the pulpit a letter and a postage stamp. Here is the letter, one that came to me the other day in its original envelope as the postman brought it to my door. And here is the postage stamp, just an ordinary three-cent stamp with the picture of George Washington on it, printed in purple ink. And everybody knows that the stamp on the letter makes the letter go. You cannot mail a letter without a stamp. The stamp is essential to the letter's getting to the person or persons to whom you address it and to whom you mail it.

One Saturday night, not so long ago, I mailed seven different pieces of mail at the postoffice in Gouverneur. I put all seven letters in the slot at the same time and at the same place on Saturday night. By the very next Monday

morning one of these letters would be on a minister's desk in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. One of them would be on a minister's desk in Wilmington, Delaware. One of them on another minister's desk in Watertown, New York. Still another on a minister's desk in New Haven, Connecticut. Still another would be on an editor's desk in Princeton, New Jersey. The sixth letter would be on the desk of a bookstore manager in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. And the seventh letter would be on the desk of an officer of the police department in the city of Ogdensburg, New York. Seven different letters to seven different people in seven different cities in five different states were all mailed together on Saturday night and all were delivered properly and on time by Monday morning. Not one of them got mixed up. Not one of the seven went where one of the others should have gone. They all got to the proper destination without any more worry or any more work or any more cost to me. I just took them to the post office and dropped them into the slot. Then I could rest assured that by Monday every one of them would be delivered and delivered promptly and delivered properly. And each one only cost me three cents to send! Now when you think about it, isn't that a wonderful thing? To have the government tend to this important matter for us; and so cheaply!

But letters make us think of some lessons that come to our minds.

We trust the government—the United States Government—to do this for us. We all feel that if we take

the letters to the post office or to the postbox at the corner the government will take care of our letters for us and will deliver them to the persons we want them to go to. We are sure that they will be all right. We trust the government. Well, if we trust the government to deliver letters for us, why not trust God to do the things that God says He will do for us? God makes richer and more wonderful promises to us even than the wonderful feat of delivering letters to seven cities in five states in two days. But if the government, made up of mere men, can do a wonderful feat like that, why do we not always feel perfectly sure that God, who is far greater than men, can do what He promises us He will do? We trust the government to do its work and to keep its promises. Why not trust God to do His work in the world and to keep the wonderful promises He has made to us?

The second lesson the stamp teaches. In itself the stamp is not worth anything at all. It is only a tiny square of paper with some ink on one side and a bit of mucilage on the other. But it is valuable because it stands for something. We call it a symbol for what's behind it. In itself it is nothing. But behind it stands the United States Government and stands the service of taking care of, transporting, and delivering mail that that government of the United States has undertaken. This tiny bit of paper, then, is a symbol for a great nation and for a wonderful service to the people of that nation. So our little lives, not so important in themselves, are only symbols for God in the world. We truly belong to God and there-

fore our lives should be evidence that He is in the world, that He is in us. They stand for Him, they show people that He is here, working in us and through us. So let your life, no matter how unimportant and insignificant you may think yourself to be, become a symbol for God. Prove to the world that God is in you, that you are His, that He works and lives through you.

But there is a third lesson for us this morning. You know that, without the stamp, the letter does not go; the government will not do the work; the letter will not be carried. The stamp in itself is nothing, but it stands for the government that is back of it. But unless you put the stamp on your letter, it will not go. Now we are something like a letter in this respect. We must have the stamp of God on us if we want God to work through us. We must be stamped with His name, with His approval, with His ownership, if we expect Him to do His work in the world through us. You must have the government's stamp on your letter if you expect the government to do its work and carry that letter to its destination. Just so, you must have the stamp of God on you if you expect that God will do His work in and through you and carry you to your destination, which is eternal life, a place in His house forever. What is His stamp on you? Why, the proof that you are His, the evidence that you belong to Him. If you act and talk and think as God wants you to, then God is in you; then you have the stamp of God upon you!

CHAPTER XVII

THE AIRPLANE

Object—A toy airplane.

I HAVE brought into the pulpit this morning a toy airplane to show to the boys and girls. However, it is not about this toy that I wish to speak, but about the real thing, of which this toy is but a poor imitation. An airplane is a wonderful thing. We see one often flying over our heads through the sky. Some of you, possibly, have ridden in one. Now an airplane makes us think of certain things about ourselves and about our lives.

I

In the first place, an airplane lifts us to the sky. That is the first thing we think of about it. That really is what it is for, to take people up above the earth and to carry them to the sky. Now that makes us think that our lives should do for our souls what the airplane does for our bodies. Our lives should lift up our souls to the sky.

There is a lovely old hymn we sometimes sing:

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky."

We should get above earthly things to heaven. Our souls are intended to dwell forever with God. Where God is, is heaven. And sometimes we use the word "sky" to mean "heaven," where God is. That is what the hymn means—that our souls belong to God and should dwell with him forever in heaven. And our Christian lives should lift up our souls to heaven, to the presence of God. Just as the airplane lifts up our bodies to the sky, so our Christian lives should lift our souls to heaven.

II

Now in the second place, the airplane reminds us of our lives because it is useless in the place where it is not meant to be. The airplane is useless any place other than the sky, or the air, where it is intended to move. It is not made to go on the land and it is simply no good on the land. It is not made to go in the forest and it is simply no good in the forest. It is not made to go on the water (unless it it a hydroplane) and it is simply no good on the water. It is no good anywhere except where it is meant to be. But the life of each of us is like that, too. It is useless if it is out of place, if it is where it is not supposed to be, if it is where God did not intend it to be. God made us and gave us our lives. And God has a plan for every human life. If your life is somewhere other than where God planned, then your life is useless. It is no good. God may want you to be a missionary. And your life will be useless and valueless if that is what God wants you to be and you do not become a missionary. God

may want you to be a nurse, or a doctor, or a teacher, or a minister; and if you put your life where it is not meant to be, you will be a failure.

III

The third thing about the airplane that makes us think of our lives is the fact that it is useless without a pilot. The airplane simply won't go without a pilot. It is worthless without someone who knows how to run it. It must have a pilot. But so must our lives. Our lives will not run correctly or smoothly without a pilot. Our lives will not go where they ought to go without a pilot. Our lives will run into all kinds of troubles and difficulties without a pilot. Our lives will get into all kinds of smash-ups without a pilot. And who is our Pilot? Christ, our Saviour, should be our Pilot. For if he is, our lives will be successes. If he is not, our lives will be wrecked.

I wonder if we cannot think of some of these things every time we see an airplane in the sky!

CHAPTER XVIII

PASTE

Object—A tube or a bottle of library paste.

Does this tube of paste that I hold in my hand this morning look like you, boys and girls? Well, it may not look very much like you, but it makes me think of you, just the same. Why? Because paste sticks! That is the chief thing about it. That is what it is for. That is what we buy it for. That is what we use if for. But sometimes it reminds me of you. Paste sticks and sometimes we stick! Now, do you see the connection?

I

But, boys and girls, I want to advise you not to be paste where you are not wanted! That is the first thing I want to say to you this morning about paste. Sometimes we get paste where we do not want it. It will stick all right. That is what it is made to do and that is what it is for. But when we get it in the wrong place, we are sorry that it does stick. The other day I was doing up some papers in a package and I got some paste in the wrong place, where I really did not want it at all. And I tell you I was sorry then that it could stick so well and that it did stick! It got my papers all mixed up. It made the wrong

ones stick together. And when I tried to get them apart, some of them tore. You see, the paste was in the wrong place, and it did harm and not good. Paste is a bad thing when you get it where you do not want it.

And so I say to you, don't be paste—that is to say, don't stick—where you are not wanted. Now that is a good rule for boys and girls to follow. Don't stick where you are not wanted. Sometimes, at a big family party, the older people will want to talk and visit about old times, and they don't want us little ones around. They just want to visit together and they do not care to be bothered with children running about and yelling and calling to each other. Now when such a time as that comes, don't stick, don't stay around. Go out and play together. Don't stick where you are not wanted.

II

And in the second place, don't stick where you do not belong. Paste is right and proper where it does belong. But it is all wrong where it does not belong. It does not belong on a chair, for example, nor on the carpet, nor on a great many other places we could think of. But so it is with you. There are some places where you just do not belong, where you really have no business at all to be. Don't stick in these places! You know many such places, I am sure. I do not have to name them for you. I mean bad company, for one thing. You don't belong in bad company, so don't stick there. I mean poolrooms and cheap dance halls and saloons and many other places.

You just do not belong there, that's all. So don't go there and don't stay there. Don't stick where you don't belong!

III

But in the third place, let me say to you, when you are right, *stick there*. When you are doing the right thing, when you are in the right place, when you are where you ought to be and where you belong, then stick. And don't let anybody pull you away! You will find a great many people who will want to pull you away when you are doing the right thing. You will find many people who will want to pull you away when you are in the right place and get you to go away with them to some place that is evil and wrong. But don't let them budge you. When you are right, stick! And if you stick, you will help somebody else to stick, too. Don't forget that! Paste not only sticks itself, but it holds fast the thing that it is used on. It makes the article you are pasting stick too. So will your example when you stick fast to the thing that is right and stick fast to the place that is right. For you will always, at such a time and in such a place, help others to stick!

CHAPTER XIX

"YOU CAN'T ALWAYS TELL BY THE OUTSIDE"

Matthew 23: 27—"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

Object—A peach.

THE other day Mrs. Schofield was peeling peaches, like this one I hold in my hand. After she had peeled several of the juicy fruit, she remarked to me, as I came into the room where she was working, that she had discovered in working with these peaches that very often the best-looking peaches on the outside had worms inside. And also, very often, those that were scrubby on the outside were the best underneath.

Now, my friends, amusements are often like that. Those that appear to be the most attractive outside are often discovered to be very poor when we get into them and really see them and know them. And very frequently, also, those pleasures and amusements that are not so appealing on the outside are the most satisfying when we get into them. Now I am sure you know just what I mean when I say this, and I am also sure that every one of you could think of many examples of exactly the thing I am

talking about. You know very well that some of the amusements, some of the pleasures, some of the types of fun that appear most desirable on the outside are poor and miserable and unsatisfying when we enter into them. Some things that we think are going to be a lot of fun are like the peaches that look good on the outside but are no good when we get into them. And some pleasures and amusements that do not seem to offer very much, when we first see them, prove to be the best after all; they really please us most; they really satisfy us best. Some exciting game; running away from home; smoking behind the barn; doing what the other boys ask us to but of which mother and father disapprove—these are some of the amusements that appear very inviting on the outside, but are disappointing and worthless when we actually get into them and make us miserable instead of happy. You could add many more, I am sure, to this list. Being home with mother and father of an evening; having a nice little family picnic with brothers and sisters; doing what our parents or our teachers ask of us; the simple, humble, homely games that we play at home; the simple, friendly parties that our parents provide for us—these, and many more, are the amusements that may not seem so inviting on the outside, like the poor, scrubby peach, but are the best after all when we get into them and learn to enjoy them.

Now if this is true of amusements in general, it is especially true of an institution that has come back to us in great strength and power in the last few years. I refer to the saloon, or the taproom or the tavern, or whatever name

it may go by, the place where alcoholic drinks are sold. You will discover, boys and girls, that the saloon or the cocktail-bar is usually very attractive on the outside. The windows are gay and colorful and attractive. The lights are bright. The tables are showy. Outside it looks beautiful and inviting. Inside it is full of death and corruption. Alcohol is poison, and those who drink are surely, if slowly, poisoning themselves to death. And sometimes it is not so slow, either. But sickness, sorrow, disease, trouble, poverty, misery, death are the things that come out of the saloon, always and everywhere. It may look inviting from the outside. It is full of death and corruption within. Boys and girls, keep away from such places!

But friends, too, are like the peaches. Sometimes we find that the friends who are the most attractive outside are not always the best when we get to know them. The boys and girls that seem the ones we would like to know best are frequently discovered to be not the most loyal, not the most friendly, not the most helpful, not the truest. Those that shine most outside, that make the best first appearance, that seem to make friends with you most easily and quickly, may not be the kind of true and loyal friends that stick by you and are the most desirable after all. And those that may not be so attractive outside often turn out to be the best friends after all—the truest, most loyal, most trustworthy, stanchest, most dependable friends of all. So when you choose your friends, as when you choose your amusements, don't just look on the outside,

but look, as far as you can, on the heart. For "you can't always tell by the outside."

Now that is exactly what Jesus, our Saviour, said in the text for this sermon this morning. His words are to be found in Matthew, the twenty-third chapter and the twenty-seventh verse: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outword, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." Some amusements are like that; the saloon is like that; some people are like that—beautiful and white and attractive outside—full of death and corruption within. For "you can't always tell by the outside."

CHAPTER XX

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE

Isaiah 28: 10—"For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."

Object—A picture of the George Washington Bridge or of any great suspension bridge.

THE boys and girls have a text this morning. It is found in God's Word, in the Book of Isaiah, the twenty-eighth chapter and the tenth verse: "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." And before I am through with my Children's Sermon, I hope you all will see why this text was chosen for this talk.

In the year 1932 the famous George Washington Bridge was opened to traffic, the longest suspension bridge in the world, up to that time. Perhaps many of you have seen it or have crossed over it; and if you have not yourselves, no doubt many of your parents have. You know it stretches across the Hudson River from New York City to the State of New Jersey. I have driven across it three times with my car and every time I cross it I am amazed at its wonder. It has a span 3,240 feet long, which is almost two-thirds of a mile. Imagine a bridge almost

two-thirds of a mile long! It stretches across the Hudson River at an elevation of 155 feet. That means that the bridge floor is 155 feet above the water of the river, at the time of high water—at the time when the water of the river is as high as it ever gets. Now most of us do not realize just how high 155 feet really is. But maybe you will understand a little more clearly if I tell you that a building thirteen stories high could easily stand between the water of the mighty river and the under side of the bridge. Now of course you could not get a thirteen-story building under the bridge; I mean you could not build one on top of the water. But I told you this just to illustrate the height for you. If you could get a building to stand on top of the water, and if that building were thirteen stories high, it could stand at full height and not touch the bottom of the floor of the bridge.

This mammoth bridge, over the majestic Hudson, is held up by two great towers which in turn support four great cables. And from these four great cables there is hung the floor of the bridge by a vast number of upright rods that hang onto the cables, extend down to the floor, and, being fastened to the floor, hold it up. That is why the bridge is called a suspension bridge. The floor is suspended from the four cables that stretch across the river and in turn are held up by the two mighty towers. And the result is a bridge so big and so strong that thousands of automobiles, trucks, and buses can run across it every hour. A large part of the traffic of the greatest city of the world is carried across this bridge. As fast as you can

count, vehiches of all sorts hasten in both directions across it.

Now a very interesting thing about this bridge is the fact that this mighty span, carrying the mighty traffic of the great City of New York, began as just one thin wire stretched across the water between the two great towers. That's the way it was built. That's the way they got the bridge across the river! They started with just one thin wire, one-quarter of an inch in diameter—no bigger than a pencil. Such a tiny wire could never hold up such a mighty bridge. Nor was it ever intended to. But that is the way the bridge started. This tiny wire was stretched across the river between the two towers. Then another one was stretched across. Then another one. Then another one. And one by one the little wires were stretched across, and then all were bound together to make a mighty cable. One by one the wires were stretched across to make the second cable, and the third and the fourth, until at last all four were across and in place. Then there was enough wire cable to hold up the bridge, and the work of hanging the bridge itself, upon the uprights that extend down from the cables, could begin. The work of building the bridge began in 1921, but it was not finished and opened to traffic until 1932—200 years after the birth of George Washington, the Father of Our Country. And because it was completed and opened 200 years after the birth of George Washington it was named after him.

Now just as that bridge was built, so character is built. It does not just spring up all "ready-made." The bridge

began with one small wire stretched across above the water. So character is formed, with one small act, with one small word, with one small thought. And then, one by one, others are added until the great strong cable, that we call character, is the result. That is the way also that habit is formed. You do not start a habit, good or bad, already formed and full-grown. A habit begins with a small thing and then grows and grows until it becomes a fixed part of our life, which is difficult, not to say impossible, to change. One little deed, one little word, one little thought, repeated and repeated, will develop into a habit. Both character and habits start from very small beginnings. That is what makes the little things so important. For if the little things are good they will be the beginnings of good habits and of a good character. If they are bad, bad habits will result and bad character will be formed. Watch the little things and remember when you do them, when you say them, when you think them, you are forming your habits and are building your character.

That is what Isaiah meant when he told us in our text, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."

CHAPTER XXI

THE SHIP[1]

Psalm 107: 23—"They that go down to the sea in ships."

Object—A picture of an ocean liner cut from an advertising poster.

THE Bible, in Psalm 107: 23, speaks of those "that go down to the sea in ships"; and I should like to speak to the boys and girls this morning about one of the great ocean liners, one of the great ships that travel across the deep, blue sea. I have traveled on such a ship to Europe and also on another to the Virgin Islands in the West Indies. And there are a great many things about the ship that are very interesting indeed. Many of you have seen these great giants that cross the ocean. Some of you have been on one of them, and possibly some of you have even crossed the sea on one. I have here a picture of a ship for those to look at who have never seen one. You will notice how huge it is. Hundreds and even thousands of people can live on one of these boats for many days. Indeed it is a city afloat. More people can travel on one of these boats at one time than all the people who live in

[1] Chapters XXI to XLI were suggested to the author by a trip to the Virgin Islands in the West Indies. They are outlined here merely as suggestions. The subjects can be adapted for use with any group of boys and girls by any minister who has taken a sea trip or who is at all familiar with ships.

many a town or village in this State. The *Leviathan* during the World War carried 10,000 American soldiers, besides her crew, to France every trip.

Now if it takes six or seven or ten days to get from New York to Europe, and several hundreds of people are traveling on the ship at the same time, do you not see how big a task it is to manage one of these ocean liners? There is as much to do to provide for all the people on board as it would be to take care of, feed, and house an entire little city. For these people need water for drinking, for cooking, and for washing faces and hands. And the ship has to carry, in great tanks, enough water for the use of all the people on the boat for all the days that the journey will take. The ship must also carry food. For when you are out in the middle of the ocean, you cannot run to the corner to the grocery store to get something to eat. The ship has to carry enough for all the people on it for all the days that they will be on it; and some to spare, besides. And then, too, there must be butchers to cut up the meat, cooks to prepare the food, bakers to make bread and cake, waiters to serve the meals, and all kinds of men and women to help. Then the ship has to be lighted, because it travels at night as well as by day. This means that there has to be an electric light plant to make the current, and a system of wires to carry the electricity to all parts of the boat. Then also, the ship must be heated, for it travels in winter as well as in summer. This means that heat has to be generated in great boilers, and carried in steam pipes to all parts of the ship. Besides all this, the ship has walks

all over it, so that people can get from one place to another: corridors and halls and stairways that connect all the various parts inside; and long, airy decks along the outside, so that people can walk in the open air. And then, there are places in which people sleep; others where they write, or lounge, or eat. Everybody has to have a room in which to sleep. And it is as if a thousand or more homes, for people to live in, were built right into the ship and carried along with it. A ship is a wonderful thing!

Today, these great ships are driven by steam engines which turn the propellers, and send the boats through the water. But in the days gone by, the ships were propelled by sail. Huge pieces of canvas were set up on masts, and the wind blew against them, and drove the ship before it. But some days the wind did not blow, and some days it blew in the wrong direction, and some days it blew a gale; and always this method of travel was slow and dangerous and uncertain. So the modern steamship is a great improvement over the old sailing vessel. It is so much faster and surer and more comfortable. By means of the steamship, people are now able to cross quickly and safely vast bodies of water that we used to think were almost impassable. Man is today able to cross the great seas that man used to think could never be crossed.

And it is God who helps man to do it. God helps us conquer nature and *enjoy* it. What He has made, He lets us use and enjoy. 'Way back in the beginning He told man, in Genesis 1 : 27, 28, to subdue the world and enjoy it.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

And just as God will help us conquer nature and enjoy it, so God will help us build our lives. Let us recognize Him in all that we do. Let us ask Him to help us. Let us do what He wants us to do. Let us ask Him to aid us in building lives that will be beautiful and strong and powerful; using what He puts in the world for His glory, and for our growth in Him.

CHAPTER XXII

"ALL ASHORE THAT'S GOING ASHORE"

Hebrews 12: 1—"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

Object—The picture used in Chapter XXI.

Boys and girls, you will remember that last week I told you about the ship which sails the seas and I showed you this picture of an ocean liner which I have brought with me again today. I tried to show you how wonderful one of these tremendous boats is and how interesting it is to take a trip on one of them. Now today I want to tell you about something that takes place when one of these giant ships is about to sail.

Everybody who is going to take the trip gets on the great boat about an hour before it is time for her to start. They do that in order to find their staterooms, and to take off their coats, and to put away their bundles, and to be sure that their luggage is all on the vessel. Now almost all the passengers have friends who come down to the pier to see them sail. And so there is always a large number of visitors who are swarming all over the boat just before she is ready to start. These persons like to see the rooms that their friends are going to live in, and the splendid dining halls where they will take their meals, and the fine

decks where they will take their morning walks while they are sailing across the ocean. But these visitors who are on the boat, of course are not going to sail, and so, before the trip begins, they have to be told to get off.

So it is, that about half an hour before sailing time, a boy who works on the boat, usually one of the bellboys or one of the waiters, goes all through the vessel, beating a great gong with a heavy drumstick, and calling out, "All ashore that's going ashore." Along all the decks he goes, shouting, "All ashore that's going ashore." Into the great dining halls, and the parlors, and the fine, large lounge rooms; and down the long, narrow corridors, between hundreds of little staterooms, he goes; shouting everywhere he appears, "All ashore that's going ashore." That means that all the visitors must say good-by at once and get off the boat. Everybody who does not belong on the vessel must get off. Everybody who is not going to take the trip, everybody who intends to go ashore and not remain on the ship, must get off or be carried out to sea on the great liner which is soon to sail. And so, from everywhere, people hurry to get off. Down the great gangplank they swarm, and off the boat onto the dock. And soon the great gangplank is let go from the side of the boat and hauled down onto the pier; and all the great ropes are released and pulled onto the ship; the little tugboats puff and pant and push and pull against the great vessel. And slowly and majestically, the mighty boat swings out into the stream and puts out to sea, sailing out upon the bosom of the mighty ocean.

Now, do you know, boys and girls, that whenever I hear that boy shout his warning, "All ashore that's going ashore," I think that it is just so in life? Every life is like a ship starting on a great journey, and there are often many things on the ship that do not belong there. We are not to take them along with us when we go on our journey of life. There are temptations. Sometimes they come to all of us, but they do not belong in our lives. They may come to visit us, but they have no tickets. They have no right on our ships. There are also bad habits that we should not take along when we set sail on the ship of life. There are also bad thoughts that sometimes come in and visit us. But these, too, do not belong there.

Now we cannot always help their coming on our ships that we call our lives. Temptations and bad habits and evil thoughts often come to see us and to visit our lives. We cannot stop their coming, sometimes, but we can put them off when we set sail. When our journey starts, let us drive off our ships everything that does not belong, everything that has no right there, everything that we do not want to take with us on the journey of life. Let us drive them off. "All ashore that's going ashore!"

Do you know, I think that is what the apostle meant when he said in Hebrews 12: 1, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us"? Let us put aside everything that will hinder our race, that will impede our progress, that doesn't belong on the ship of life. "All ashore that's going ashore."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CAPTAIN

Object—The picture used in Chapter XXI, or a picture of a sea captain in uniform.

Boys and girls, you have been hearing something about the great ships that cross the ocean. I have brought the picture of the ocean liner again today to show you once more what I have been talking about. You remember that two weeks ago I told you something of what these great and wonderful ships are like. And then, last week, I told you something that usually happens when the ship begins its journey, and when all who do not belong upon it, have to get off. Now, today, I want to tell you something about the Captain, the man who has complete charge of the entire ship and who gives orders to everybody upon it.

I

You have all heard of the Captain of the ship, and you all know that he is the highest officer on it. He rules the whole ship. He gives the orders and everybody has to obey them. He is in absolute charge. He has the final say in everything. His word is the law of the ship. There is never any question as to who rules. Everybody knows that the Captain is the head of the ship. No one ever

asks what right he has to give orders. What he says goes, and everybody else knows that they must obey. Now if it were not so, there would be the worst kind of confusion on board. For such a thing as a ship, far from land, all by itself out on the great ocean, must have its laws and must have its head. And one person must be that head. He must have absolute authority over it and over all on it. Only thus can trouble and misunderstanding and confusion be prevented. That is the first thing that one always notices about the Captain. He rules.

II

The second thing about the Captain that everybody knows, is that in case of trouble of any kind on board the ship, he is called on. When anything goes wrong, whenever there must be something decided, whenever any person is in any difficulty, the Captain is notified and he decides what is best to do. If something goes wrong with the engine; if something happens among the men who run the ship; if something comes up about which the passengers must get help—it is the Captain who is called on. He is the man who is always ready and able to settle trouble.

III

And this means that there is a third thing to know about the Captain. He is responsible for the safety of the boat and of all who are on it. If there is any accident, it is the Captain who is responsible, who must take the blame. He is in charge of the ship. All the passengers are in his

care, and so is the great boat itself with all the freight that may be in its hold. And the Captain must take the blame if anything happens to any of the property or to any of the people that are placed within his charge. He is responsible for the safety of the ship and everything on it.

Now the Captain makes us think of our lives, for there is a Person who stands to us as the Captain stands to his ship. The Epistle to the Hebrews says, in one place, that Christ is the Captain of our Salvation. Christ, who gives us salvation, is our Captain. Now let us see if what the Captain of the ocean liner does for his ship is not very much like what Jesus Christ, the Captain of our Salvation, does for our lives.

First of all, Christ should rule our lives just as surely and just as truly as the Captain rules his ship. He should rule us. His word should be our law. What he says, we should do. He should give his orders and we should obey him. And there should never be any question as to Who is the Ruler of our lives. It must be Jesus. That must never be doubted. For if it should be doubted, then there will be the wildest confusion in our lives and they will not get to the port for which they aim. Christ is our Captain, and he must be our Ruler.

Now in the second place, if Christ is the Captain of our lives, in any time of trouble we should be able to go to him and he will get us out of it. He will settle it. If anything goes wrong, if we make any mistake, if we commit any sin, if we get into any difficulty whatever in life, we

should go to our great Captain with it, explain it to him, and he will settle it for us.

In the third place, if Christ is our Captain, he will take full responsibility for our entire lives. He will guarantee our safety. He will see to it that the voyage of each life is safe and sure and finally ends in the harbor of God's love. He will take care of us and insure our safe travel. He will protect us and keep us. If Christ is our Captain, we shall always be safe.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE RUDDER

James 3: 4—"Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersover the governor listeth."

Object—The picture used in Chapter XXI or a rudder cut from pasteboard.

My dear boys and girls: I have been telling you something about a trip I once took and a little about the ship on which the trip was taken. This morning I should like to tell you a little more about the ship. I want to talk to you about the rudder. Did you know that the Bible speaks about a rudder? Only it calls it by an older name, the helm. You will find it in James 3: 4, and I wish you would all look this verse up in your own Bibles when you get home: "Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth."

The rudder, you know, is the thing that turns the ship, making it go in this direction or in that, as the Captain directs. It is a small object, very tiny and insignificant compared to the size of the ship. It is fastened, you know, under the back part of the boat, which is called the stern, just below the water level. And when the rudder is pulled

in one direction or in the other, the great ship ahead of it, to which it is attached, turns to the one side or to the other. And so it is that a very small instrument, properly fastened to the ship and properly managed, will turn a large vessel and cause it to go where the Captain intends it to go.

But if the rudder turns the ship, what turns the rudder? 'Way up high in the vessel, on what seafaring men call "the bridge," is a huge wheel. I am sure you have all seen the wheel if you have ever seen any kind of a large boat. At least you have seen pictures of it. Now this wheel is connected to the rudder by a system of cables, chains, ropes, and so forth, depending on the size and kind of boat. One of the sailors turns that wheel and by machinery, usually, the turning of the wheel causes the ropes and pulleys and cables to turn the rudder and the rudder turns the ship. Now in a small boat there is no machinery to turn the rudder. The sailor at the wheel does it by hand. Also in the large boats, if anything should go wrong with the machinery, the sailor could turn the rudder by hand by means of the wheel.

Now James says, in the verse that comes next after our text, that the tongue is to a man or a woman or a boy or a girl like the rudder to a ship. Let us read what he says: "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things." Just as the little rudder turns the great ship, so the little tongue can turn you, a great big boy, a fine grown-up girl, a strong man, a lovely woman. Sometimes your tongue can steer you and send you in a certain direction. That is to say that your tongue can get

you places! Your tongue can steer you along the right path. Or your tongue can get you into trouble and send the ship of your life upon the rocks. You all know that James told the truth, don't you? You all know how your tongue can help you, sometimes; how it can get you places by the questions it asks and the pleasant things it will say. And you also know how it can get you into very serious trouble by the evil things it says, by the mean things it talks about, by its impudence sometimes and its meanness at other times. Your tongue can steer you into the deep channel of happiness or it can direct you against the rocks of anger and sadness and trouble.

Now the sailor must be in perfect control of the rudder all the time, to turn the ship where it ought to go. If he loses control of the rudder, the ship will always get into trouble and it might even be lost forever. For if the rudder is not directed, the ship will not be turned where the Captain intends it to go, but will drift hither and thither just as the loose rudder happens to direct it. An uncontrolled rudder will always send the ship into danger. So exactly, you must always be in control of your tongue so it does what you want it to do. For if you let it get out of control, it will surely get you into trouble. You should manage your tongue. Your tongue should not manage you. You should direct it to do what you want. You should never let it get out of control and direct you and make you do what it wants. Your tongue is like the rudder. You are like the sailor. Be sure the sailor always has control of the rudder!

CHAPTER XXV

THE BRIDGE

Object—The picture used in Chapter XXI.

I HAVE been telling you about the great ships that cross the mighty ocean. Today I want to tell you about the Bridge. In the front part of the ship, just back of the very front point which sailors call "the bow," and high above the deck, is a sort of platform or runway that extends right across the ship. Sometimes a large part of it, or all of it, may be inclosed. Usually the Captain's quarters are very near, just back of it or having a doorway that opens out onto it. In many ways the bridge is the most important part of the ship, because it directs the ship; it is the place from which all the orders that run the ship come. For here, on the bridge, are the various instruments that control the vessel. Here is the great wheel, which steers the ship. Here is the compass. Here are the maps of the ocean and the charts. Here is where the Captain gives his orders and here is where the officers of the ship direct its activities and manage the voyage.

Here on the bridge is the wonderful telegraph instrument that sends orders down to the engine room, far, far below. This telegraph instrument has a great handle which the Captain or the man on duty sets with his hand and which notifies the engineers down in the engine room how to run the engines: "full steam ahead" or "stop";

"quarter speed ahead" or "half speed ahead"; or "reverse the engines."

Now someone has said that the bridge is the brain of the ship, because the bridge gives all the orders to the rest of the ship. And our brains do that for our bodies, you know. The brain is to the body what the bridge is to the ship. The brain sends out its orders and the body obeys. You know that, don't you? It is your brain that tells you to stop, to go, to sit down, to run, to walk. When you desire to lift up your arm, your brain sends a telegraph message to your arm, and your arm obeys, and up it goes! When you want to take a step, your brain has to send a telegraph message down to your leg, to step; and out your leg goes! Your brain gives the orders and the rest of your body obeys them. If it were not for this, you never could do anything, because all of your body, just like all of a ship, has to be directed from some central place. Otherwise all your muscles and all your nerves and all your bones would be trying to do things by themselves, and confusion would be the result.

But now suppose something went wrong with the bridge. Suppose something got out of order on the bridge. Suppose the compass did not read correctly, or the telegraph to the engine room went wrong, or the wheel that turns the rudder was broken. Why, then, of course there would be trouble for the ship!

Now it is exactly the same with our brains. If our brains are not working correctly, then there is trouble for us. If our brains do not work properly, then our bodies

cannot work properly. And, my dear boys and girls, there are a great many things that will make our brains get out of order. For example, anger will upset our brains and throw them out of order and cause trouble. When we get very angry with other people, when we get what we call "awfully mad" at others, then our brains are confused and befuddled and we are apt to do things that are not right and that we shall be sorry for afterward. Evil thoughts will confuse and corrupt our minds and cause trouble in our lives. Bad desires will do the same. If we want very badly things that are not good for us, or things that we ought not to have, or things that belong to others and that we have no right to—these evil desires will upset our brains. The Bible calls them lust or envy or covetousness. And when such bad desires and evil wants get into us they upset our brains and often cause us to do things that are very wrong.

So all sin will upset our brains and cause trouble in our lives. So will alcohol, the poison which is found in beer and whisky and wine. Alcohol always upsets one's brain so much that, if he has taken quite a little, he will not know what he is doing. Cigarettes, also, will upset the brain of a young boy or a young girl and will so confuse and trouble him that it will affect his acts. The boy whose brain is saturated with cigarette smoke is a slow student, a poor athlete, and might also have a stunted body.

Boys and girls, be sure each of you keeps his brain in good working order. Keep it clear! For the brain is the bridge that directs the ship of your life!

CHAPTER XXVI

THE ANCHOR

Hebrews 6: 19—"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

Object—An anchor made of cardboard on a chain made of loose-leaf notebook rings, obtainable at any stationery or ten-cent store.

TODAY we come to the anchor. All you boys and girls know what an anchor looks like, because you either have seen a real one, or have seen a picture of one. Most of you, sometime or other in your lives, have had sailor suits or sailor dresses or sailor hats, with anchors on the sleeves or the pockets or the hatbands. Here is an anchor that I have cut out of cardboard to show you what one looks like.

Now the anchor is a very important thing on a boat. It is made of iron. It is usually very large and very heavy. The lower end branches out into two or more great arms with huge iron claws on the ends of them. It is extended from the ship on a great, massive, iron chain; and, when occasion arises, it is let down into the water; and it holds the boat, preventing it from drifting, when it must be held still, either in a harbor or in a storm. When a vessel is at anchor, we understand that to mean that

it is standing still, kept from being blown out to sea, and kept from drifting, by the anchor. The anchor, then, is used to keep the ship still in a harbor, or to keep it from being blown away in a storm.

The Bible tells us that we have an anchor. Our anchor is hope. You will find the text which tells about it in Hebrews, the sixth chapter and the nineteenth verse: "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." Hope, then, for human lives, is an anchor. That is, if it is true hope. It will hold us, just like the anchor holds the ship, in time of storm, in time of trouble, in time of doubt.

But the anchor of a vessel, we find, must grasp something. It cannot be used in deep water. For if it is going to hold the ship, it must go to the bottom, and firmly grasp something. That is why the anchor must be used only in a harbor or other shallow water. It must dig into the bottom of the sea, or cling to a rock, or it will not hold the ship at all. If it should just hang on the end of its chain in deep water, under the vessel, and find no bottom or rock to grasp and cling to, it could not hold the ship, but would be dragged along wherever the ship might drift, or be blown.

So it is with the human anchor, hope. That anchor will do a human life no good unless it has something to cling to. The anchor of hope must be fast to something. Otherwise the ship of life will drift, or be driven about by every wind that blows, dragging its anchor after it. The anchor of hope must be fast to something! And

that something, that our anchor should cling to, is Christ. He is our Rock, the Rock of our Salvation. He will hold us firm and not let us drift into danger, or be blown into trouble. He is our Rock; and our anchor must grasp him firmly and securely. And when it does, we are firmly anchored, safe in the harbor of his love; safe from all the winds and storms of life. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

CHAPTER XXVII

FLYING FISH

Isaiah 55: 8, 9—"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Did you ever see a fish fly? I have, hundreds of them! The ocean is full of flying fish. And when I took my trip to the Virgin Islands, I saw great quantities of them. They live in large schools—that is, in large groups; and they like the deep water. So, when you are on a ship, far out to sea, you are quite apt to see these strange little fish, skimming over the surface of the water, three or four feet above the ocean itself. In fact, when the vessel passes through a school of these fish, they become frightened, and jump out of the water, and skim along above the surface in every direction, looking for all the world, as one writer has said, "like grasshoppers in a meadow."

Now, really and truly, these fish do not fly. But they do skim through the air for long distances, without touching the water; and it looks exactly as if they did fly; and that, of course, is what has given them their name. They are possessed of very strong tails; which enable

them to move very fast indeed in the water, and also enable them to rise up out of the water and skim along above it, to the height of three or four feet. And once out of the water, they can keep sailing along in the air, without going down to the water again, for great distances. Sometimes, of course, they only stay in the air for a few feet. But sometimes they stay for an eighth of a mile. Then, when the momentum has died down, and they can no longer glide through the air, they dip down into the water again, just enough to let their tails get under the surface. The tails beat rapidly in the water, the fish rise again out of the water, and again glide along in the air.

These fish do not have wings. There is no motive power that enables them to propel themselves—that is, to push themselves forward—after they get in the air. It is just the great speed they get while in the water, and the start which that gives them, that enable them to guide along. So really they do not fly, though they do stay in the air for long distances and for some minutes of time. Besides this, they have great fins, unusually large, which they spread out like wings; and which, like so many little parachutes, hold their bodies in the air.

The reason, we are told, these fish leap out of the water and glide through the air is that they wish to avoid the larger fish that want to eat them. Also, they become frightened by the ship, when it passes through a school of them; and, in their fear and their excitement, they leap out of the water. And sometimes, while gliding through

the air, the sea birds catch them and make a good meal of them.

And so, if anybody asks you if fish can fly, you can tell them that there is a kind of fish that, while it cannot really fly like a bird, can leap out of the water and glide through the air above the water for some time and for some distance. But a flying fish is a strange thing, just the same, isn't it? And doesn't it make us think that there are a great many strange things in this world? There are a great many things that we do not know. There are many things that we do not understand. But God knows, and God understands. Yet He does not tell us everything. There are some things in this wonderful world that are too deep for us to understand, if God did tell them to us. And so, let us never think that just because we do not know a certain thing, that it is not so; or worse yet, that because we do not understand something, that it cannot be. We must trust God, who knows all and understands all. And if He does not see fit to explain everything to us, we must trust Him just the same. Probably He does not intend us to know the things that are too deep for us. Let us always trust Him, whose knowledge is far above ours.

And that, my dear boys and girls, is what God wants us to do. Because He has told us so in our text, Isaiah 55: 8, 9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

CHAPTER XXVIII

HOUSES WITHOUT WINDOWS

Ecclesiastes 12: 3—". . . those that look out of the windows."

THE Bible speaks about windows. In the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes, in the third verse, we find the sacred writer referring to "those that look out of the windows." That much of the verse will be our text for the boys and girls this morning. I wish all of you would look it up in your own Bibles or in those of your fathers and mothers when you get home.

I

Did you ever hear of houses without windows? Perhaps that question sounds very strange to you. "How could you have a house without windows?" some of you are probably thinking. But they do have them in the Virgin Islands, that small possession of Uncle Sam in the Caribbean Sea that I visited one winter. There they actually do have houses without windows. "Wouldn't that make the houses dark and gloomy and unfit to live in?" some of you are thinking. No. For while the houses do not have windows, they do have the openings in the sides of the houses, where windows would naturally be,

if they had windows. They do have the openings, in the sides of the houses, that correspond to our windows, and that do let in light and air; but they do not have glass windows in those openings. They do not even have the sashes that the glass, that makes windows, usually fits into. They just have the openings and the frames. They usually do have shutters, that they can close, just as many of our houses have shutters. But these shutters simply close over the openings in the walls, for there are not any glass windows in them. The reason why there are not glass windows in the houses, but instead just openings in the walls, is that the climate in the islands, as in all the West Indies, is so hot that the people would not want the windows closed if they had them! So what is the use in having any?

Now windowless houses may seem very strange to you. But they just go to show us that we do not know how other people live! We don't realize what other people in other parts of the world do, what kind of houses they live in, what kind of clothes they wear, what sort of things they occupy themselves with, what means they use to make a living, what games they play, what things they talk about. There are different customs in different parts of the world. People live so differently from us, that we simply cannot believe some of their customs, until we see them with our own eyes! And yet they live and get along and seem to be happy.

Does not that make us think that we do not know *how* people live in heaven? The way they do things, the things

they do, the way they live, the way they look are probably all so different from the things to which we are accustomed on this earth, that we simply cannot understand them; we simply cannot realize them; we can hardly believe them. And yet they do live! We know that all those who have gone on ahead of us into God's home, which we call heaven, live there with Him, even though we cannot understand how.

II

Now there is another thing that windowless houses make us think about.

Would it not be a terrible thing to have to live in a house that really and truly had no windows? The Virgin Island houses have openings that let in light and air, even though they do not have window sashes and glass panes in them. But suppose there were such a thing as a house with not even that, with no windows of any kind. From such a house you could not see God's beautiful earth. You could not look out, and behold all the beauties that everywhere surround us—the beauties of earth and water and sky. And worse even than that, God's light would not be able to come in, and you would have to live in darkness. A house that really had no window would be a dreary place in which to live.

Now, in just the same way, it is an awful thing to live in your self so much that you cannot see God's beauty, and that God's light cannot come into your life. There are some people who live so much in themselves and for

themselves—and now I am not talking simply about the building that you make your home in, but rather about your life as if it were a house. There are some people who live so much in themselves and for themselves, that they never notice the beauty of the world around them. We say of such people that they are all wrapped up in themselves. They cannot even see the beauty of the glorious earth that God has made—the splendor of the sunset, the magnificence of a waterfall, the beauty of a mountain stream, the gorgeous colors of flowers, the turquoise-blue of the sky. It is as bad as if they lived in a house with no windows, for they just cannot see the beautiful things that God has made, and placed all around them. And worse than that, God's light cannot get a chance to come into their darkened lives. God is light; but such people will not, and probably cannot, let the light come in.

Boys and girls, never be like that. Never live so much in yourselves that you cannot let in the light of God. Let in His light, which is truth. Do not darken your life so that truth cannot come in and lighten it. Let in His light from His Word. The Bible brings light to all who read it, and study it, and love it. Never leave your life so much in the dark that the light of the Bible cannot make its way into it. Study and cherish God's Word, for His word bringeth light.

CHAPTER XXIX

SEA SHELLS

Psalm 95: 5—"The sea is his, and he made it."
Objects—Some sea shells.

THE subject of the talk this morning is "Sea Shells." The text is from the Word of God as we find it in the ninety-fifth Psalm, the fifth verse, the first part of the verse: "The sea is his, and he made it." Here the Bible is telling us that the sea belongs to God, for He made it.

I have here some shells, that I picked up on the seashore of the beautiful West Indian Islands that belong to the United States, the Virgin Islands. You remember that I spent my vacation one winter on those beautiful little islets in that beautiful, blue Caribbean Sea. Notice these shells. Some are small, some large; some are plain and smooth, some are wrinkled or fluted as if they had been folded over; some are open and flat, some are closed and thin and narrow and crooked like a corkscrew. And these are only a very few of the numberless varieties that come out of the ocean. If you should make a study of them, you would find that many shells of many shapes all come from the same great body of water that we call the ocean or the sea.

And the shells that come from the water only illustrate

or prove to us a thing that we see whenever we look around us upon nature, the vast variety that is in the natural world. It is true on land, that nature presents an almost endless variety. It is also true of the life that is in the water. The sea produces all kinds of life, all shapes, all varieties, all colors, all forms. The things that live in the sea range all the way from tiny animals, so small that you cannot really see them with the naked eye, to huge whales, so tremendous in size that they can swallow ten men. And they all come from the same sea! Tiny animals, so small that you cannot see them; and mighty monsters, so vast that they can wreck ships and swallow men—all live in the same water; all come from the same ocean. And God made them all! How great is our wonder when we realize that! God made them all! What a wonderful God, God is; to make the sea and the land and all that in them is! When you begin to realize something of the tremendous variety in nature, then you begin to realize something of the wonderful power of God. For He made them all and they are His. That is what our text told us at the very beginning of this sermon, did it not? "The sea is His, and He made it."

But He did not make all that lives in the sea just for "fun," as we boys and girls say. He did not make all the intricate variety of nature just out of idle curiosity. He made everything, that He made, for a purpose. Every animal, every creature, every wonder of nature, God made for a purpose. And if each is different from the other, each was made for a different purpose. God made it for

that purpose; God put it in the world for that purpose; and God sees to it that it fulfills the purpose He made it for and placed it here to perform.

Now we are not sea shells nor sea animals. But, like them, we are all different from each other. There are no two men exactly alike in all the world. Did you ever think of that? No two boys are exactly alike in every particular; no two girls are exact duplicates of each other. Sometimes two boys may look a great deal like each other; sometimes two girls may speak with almost identical voices; sometimes two grown persons look so very much alike that people have difficulty in telling them apart. But there will always be found something in every person that makes him distinct and individual; that makes him different from every other person in the world. And God made us, too. Just as He made the sea animals, so He made human beings—boys and girls and men and women. And He made each of us for a purpose. God made us and we are His. Our text tells us that about the sea. It might have read, "The people are his, and he made them." Indeed it does say that in almost those very words in other parts of the Bible. So we are God's. God made us. And, though each one of us is different from every other one, God has made each of us for a purpose. Do we serve the purpose for which God made us? Are we doing the thing that God put us in the world to do?

CHAPTER XXX

SPONGES

Matthew 10: 8—"Freely ye have received, freely give." Object—A sponge.

THE text for the boys and girls today is found in the Word of God as it is written in the Gospel according to Matthew, the tenth chapter and the eighth verse and the last part of the verse: "Freely ye have received, freely give." I want to speak to you this morning about sponges. To show you exactly what I am talking about, I have brought into the pulpit a little sponge that I myself picked up on the seashore of the Virgin Islands, the winter I visited that lovely little possession of our country, in the Caribbean Sea. A sponge, you know, is the skeleton or the remnants of a sea animal; and when the animal is gone from it, sometimes it is washed up on the seashore, and one can pick it up, as I did this one.

I

Now a sponge is a useful article. We all have sponges in our homes and in our garages; and we all know many of the important uses to which they are put. It serves an important purpose. And it is God who gives it to us. God makes the sponge grow; God washes it up on the shore;

God places it where we can find it. God gives it to us. But God gives us all that we need; and a sponge is only an example or an illustration of the truth that God gives to us everything in this world that we need, and that we enjoy.

II

And then, in the second place, we notice that a sponge absorbs moisture. If you place the sponge in water or pour water over it, you will see that it takes up the water; or, as we say, it absorbs it, and takes it to itself. Now that quality of the sponge is the thing that makes it valuable. And that quality of the sponge is the thing that makes us think that we ought to be like a sponge. We ought to absorb good information; we ought to take to ourselves the good things that we hear about, the good that we learn. We should drink it in, we should take it to ourselves, we should absorb it. When it comes to good information, boys and girls ought to be like sponges.

III

In the third place, you know that when you squeeze the sponge, it gives up or releases the water that is in it. That is another quality that makes the sponge a valuable thing to have about the house or the car. When you squeeze it, it gives up the water that it has. And here, too, is an example for boys and girls. For we should squeeze all the bad thoughts out of our minds. If we should be like a sponge, and absorb or take in all the good thoughts

we can, we should also be like a sponge in squeezing out all the bad thoughts.

IV

But finally, in the fourth place, we note that a sponge receives water easily and gives it up easily. Both are important qualities of the sponge. For if it did not take water easily, and release it easily, it could not be used so readily as it is. And here, again, is a lesson for us from the humble sponge. We get much from God. God gives us everything we have, and we receive it easily. We are always ready to take from Him. And if so, we should also be ready to give to Him. Because we get much from Him, we should be ready and willing at all times to give much to Him. Because it is easy for us to take from God, we should learn to make it easy for us to give to Him. I think that that is exactly what Jesus meant when he said the words of our text, "Freely ye have received, freely give." I think He meant that as we have freely received all things from God, we ought freely to give to Him and to His children and to His work. Jesus was not thinking of sponges when He said that. He was thinking of people. But don't you see that in this respect, at least, people ought to be like sponges? "Freely ye have received, freely give."

CHAPTER XXXI

CORAL

Philippians 3: 13—". . . this one thing I do . . ."
Object—A piece of coral.

My dear boys and girls, the Bible, you know, is the Word of God; and, next to our salvation, it is the greatest thing that God gives to us. It is meant to tell us about Jesus and about what he has done for us. It is the greatest book in the world.

Now in the Bible there is a verse that I want you to think about this morning. It is found in Paul's letter to the Philippians, the third chapter and the thirteenth verse: ". . . this one thing I do . . ."

When I was visiting my brother in the Virgin Islands in the West Indies, I picked up some coral on the beach. I have brought a large piece of it here into the pulpit this morning for you to see. Now it looks to you, probably, like a rock. And it feels like rock, and it is as hard as rock. But it is really not rock at all. For if you should look carefully at it, you would see tiny little holes in it, and curves and folds in it, that give it a very peculiar appearance, and make it look different from anything else in the world.

Now this is the way the coral comes to be. It is really made up of a multitude of tiny animals, originally. It is

not rock at all, but the skeletons of thousands upon thousands of these tiny animals that live in the sea. One of them grows right out of another and is attached to it. Their tiny skeletons are attached to each other; one to another, until millions of them make quite a big mass. Then the little animals or organisms, as scientists call them, die and the stuck-together skeletons remain. These harden until they become as hard as rock. And what I now hold in my hand has no life in it any more; the little animals are all dead; but their skeletons are here, all attached together in this one great mass that looks and feels like a rock.

Now the wonderful thing is that each tiny animal or organism does its work and then dies, leaving its skeleton behind attached to thousands of others. Each little animal does its duty, the thing it was put into the world to do, and then dies. These skeletons, all attached together, forming great masses that look like huge rocks, lie on the bottom of the sea. The sand from the sea bottom washes up on them, and clings to them. Birds and winds carry seeds of grasses and plants and trees, and drop them on the sand that clings to the huge coral rocks; and soon islands are made in the middle of the water, and land appears, and grass and plants and trees begin to grow. This is how many of the islands of the sea have been made. Many a coral island is now large enough for thousands of people to live on, and get their living from the vegetation that now grows on what was once just bare coral rocks, and what was before that the millions of little sea animals clinging together, about to die and leave their skeletons behind.

Each organism does what it was made by God to do and then dies. As far as we can understand, they were made to do this one thing, and this one thing only. God put them into the world for that purpose. And when they have fulfilled their purpose, God takes them out of the world.

Now we are much higher than the tiny, insignificant animals that make the coral. We are human beings; boys and girls, men and women. God made us a little lower than the angels, but much, much higher than the coral. Jesus told us once how much higher and more important a man was than a sparrow. And a sparrow is much higher than coral. But God wants us to do a certain thing for Him, too. And if we are so much higher than the coral, we at least ought to be as faithful. God gives us one thing to do in the world—to show Him to the world. That is the one thing that we are made for, and placed here on this earth to do. If we fail to do it, our life is useless; and we have failed to do the thing for which we were made.

Paul said, ". . . this one thing I do . . ." He believed that God intended him to do a certain thing, and he was going to do it. But exactly in the same way, God has put us here to do *one thing*. Let us not fail to do it. Let us show God to all the world by our faith, by the way we act, by the way we live. Remember the coral. Remember that it does what God puts it into the world to do. Remember how much higher than coral we are. Remember to do the one thing God puts us into the world to do.

Next week, I shall tell you about "The Reef."

CHAPTER XXXII

THE REEF [1]

Ezekiel 27: 29—"And all that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea . . ."

Boys and girls, today I want to tell you about "The Reef." And I want you to hear a text that I have found in the Word of God as it is written in the Book of Ezekiel, the twenty-seventh chapter and the twenty-ninth verse, the first part of the verse. I hope all you boys and girls know how to find verses in the Bible, and I hope you will all look this verse up in your Bibles at home, when you go home from Sunday school today. Remember Ezekiel is in the Old Testament. Well, this is how the first part of Ezekiel 27: 29 reads: "And all that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea." The prophet is speaking about the sailors who manage the ships. He mentions the mariners, and the men who handle the oars. And he also speaks of pilots, the men who steer the ships. Well, we shall hear of the pilot in a moment, after I tell you about "The Reef."

I have been telling you something of my recent visit to my brother, in the Virgin Islands. My brother is a naval

[1] The suggestions back of Sermons XXXII and XXXVII came from my sister, Rebecca F. Schofield, to whom I give my profound thanks.

officer, and at that time the islands were governed by the United States Navy. He lived in the city of Christiansted, on the Island of St. Croix. The city of Christiansted is built on the low hills that rise up from the water, surrounding a magnificent blue bay. The harbor is one of the most beautiful in the world, but it is used very seldom by big boats, because it is not very deep and because of the great reef that runs through it. But none the less, as you stand on the hillside and look down to the beautiful, blue water in the gorgeous bay, you see one of the loveliest sights in the whole world.

Now there is a small, ocean-going boat, called the *S. S. Catherine,* that comes into that harbor once a week. It is a neat little craft, painted a clean white, and looks like a fairy vessel as it rides at anchor out in the bay. One afternoon, we saw the *Catherine* load up with passengers and freight and steam out of the harbor. And a week later, I myself rode on the *Catherine,* out of that harbor of Christiansted in the Virgin Islands, bound for Puerto Rico; for the boat is an inter-island boat, plying between St. Croix, St. Thomas, and Puerto Rico.

Now it was very interesting on that first Sunday afternoon to see the boat sail out of the harbor, and it was very interesting the next week to go out on it. It did not steam out of the harbor in a straight line, making for the open sea. Instead of that, it traveled a course that resembled exactly the letter "S." It started out in one direction, but after proceeding a few hundred yards, it turned sharply and went in another direction for a little distance.

After another few hundred yards, it turned again, and so on until it had covered a course, in getting out of that harbor, that looked exactly like the letter "S." As we looked at it that first afternoon from the hillside, and as we traveled on it the next week, we noticed that it had to be steered very carefully, indeed. In fact, no ordinary man could steer it out of that harbor safely. A special pilot was needed—a man who knew every inch of the harbor, and who could steer the ship very carefully to avoid getting on the reef.

For there is a great reef, or bar, stretching across that harbor. It is made of coral, about which I told you last week, hard as rock; and is built up right across the shallow harbor like a shelf, or stretch of land, just under the surface of the water. When the ship is half a mile out from the land, the passengers, looking down, can see the bottom of the sea; and can observe little breakers or wavelets running up onto the coral bank of the reef, part of which can clearly be seen. Now that stretch of land that crosses the shallow harbor rises from the bottom so high, in places, that you can clearly see it; and in order to get around it safely, and not run aground, the pilot has to steer the ship in the "S" course. The reef is irregular, and the ship must steer around it, and avoid it, wherever it is. Some ships do not avoid it, run aground, and get shipwrecked. I saw a shipwrecked hull, still lying in the harbor, the dreary remains of some ship that had years before run aground on that reef in the middle of the harbor.

Now that lovely harbor, with the reef out through the

middle of it, made me think of life. Life is lovely and beautiful, like that gorgeous harbor. But sometimes, partly hidden and just under the surface, there are reefs or troubles. And to avoid running aground against the reefs, to avoid shipwreck, we must go very carefully and chart our course wisely. We must know the channel, where the going is smooth, and the water deep and calm and safe. We should have a chart of life, that will show us where the rocks and the reefs are; and where to find the smooth, open, and safe channels. Such a chart is the Bible. God's Word will show us the dangerous places in life, and help us avoid them. God's Word will show us the way to go, and will direct us into safe channels. Take this chart always with you. It will make the voyage of your life safe and sure.

And also, we should take on the Pilot in our lives, if we are to avoid trouble and shipwreck. Just as the pilot had to direct the *S. S. Catherine* across the harbor and around the reef, so the Pilot of our lives, who is Christ, must direct our lives; so that we shall get safely out of the harbor, and go safely on our voyage, and avoid the reef that will spell shipwreck and disaster. Ezekiel, the prophet, spoke in our text about pilots, among other things. The true Pilot for every life is Jesus Christ. He knows the way we should go and he will direct us. Be sure your life has the chart, the Bible. Be sure your life has the Pilot, Christ.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE HERMIT OR SOLDIER CRAB [1]

Object—Almost any sea shell.

I WANT to tell the boys and girls today about the Hermit Crab. Sometimes he is called the Soldier Crab.

You will remember that I have been telling you something of a trip I took one winter to the Virgin Islands, Uncle Sam's newest possession, in the West Indies; and something of the interesting things I saw there. We used often to go to the beach; where the beautiful, sandy shore of these tiny coral islands met the glorious, blue water of the Caribbean Sea on the south; or the deep, majestic, green water of the Atlantic Ocean on the north. And often, as we walked along the beach, I would see sea shells—some little, tiny ones; some great, large ones; some like the one I hold in my hand—moving along the shore, as if they had legs! Sea shells walking! Did you ever hear of such a thing? Sea shells, cast up upon the beach after the shellfish that had lived in them had died, walking along the beach on legs! And indeed they did have legs; because I could see them extending out from under the shell, and hurrying the shell along the shore!

But as we watched the shells moving on the beach, we

[1] The suggestion behind this sermon came to me from my brother, Lt. Comm. A. R. Schofield, U. S. N., and my sister, Rebecca F. Schofield, to whom my thanks are given.

soon discovered that there was a crab in each one. How many of you know what a crab is? I do not mean the ordinary crawfish that boys and girls catch in our little brooks and creeks, and which we sometimes use for bait when we go fishing. But I mean the sea crabs, round like an oyster, with great claws on either side, and with their legs beneath. Well, there is a variety of sea crab that lives in southern waters which does not have a hard shell of its own; and which, therefore, crawls into a discarded shell of a shellfish and lives in it. I have told you that the empty, discarded shells of sea fish, after the fish are dead, are cast up on the beach. The Hermit Crab finds one, crawls into it, and makes it his home; and whenever he wants to move around, he carries the shell along with him. Indeed he grows into it, and after a bit fills it all up. And when he outgrows it, he just discards it and finds another and a bigger one; and crawls into that and makes that his home until he has outgrown that; then he begins the process all over again. He lives in another's house; he inhabits another's shell.

Maybe he does this, lives this queer sort of life in another's house, for protection. He has no hard shell of his own; and so he adopts the discarded, hard shell of another that he might be protected from his enemies, that otherwise might be able to kill him and eat him. Or maybe he goes into the other's shell to hide. Maybe he thinks that if he is in a house that is not his own, if he is wearing a shell that does not belong to him, his enemies will not be able to find him; for they will not recognize him when

they see him. It may be protection or it may be hiding that he wants; or it may be both!

But, now do you know what the Hermit or Soldier Crab makes me think of? Do you know what lessons he teaches me?

I

First, he teaches me that each of us, when we are boys and girls, lives in another's house. The homes that we live in are not our own; we did not make them; we did not buy them; we do not pay the rent. They belong to others, and we should be always thankful to our parents for providing them for us. Had you ever thought of that?

II

Secondly, I notice that, although the crab might be hiding, he cannot hide his identity. He thinks he hides when he crawls into somebody else's shell. But he doesn't. Everybody that sees him knows exactly who he is. He cannot fool anybody; he cannot get away from anybody. He may think he is in hiding, while he is in plain sight all the while! And you know, we cannot hide either. Sometimes we think we can hide from our parents, our teachers, our friends. But we can't. Sometimes we think we can hide from God. But we can't do it. Our parents, our teachers, our friends see us. And so does God.

III

Thirdly, the crab makes believe that he is something that he is not. He is really just an ordinary, plain, ugly

crab. But he crawls into a beautiful shell and pretends that he is a beautiful shellfish. He puts on airs. He is what we call "high-hat." He pretends to be something that he is not. But he cannot get away with it! Everybody that sees him knows at once that he is not what he makes believe he is. Fine feathers do not make fine birds and a fine shell does not make a fine creature. He is still an ugly crab. And, dear boys and girls, let us remember that we cannot get away with such things, either. We cannot pretend to be something we are not and expect people to believe us. Let us not put on airs. Let us not become "high-hat." Let us not pretend to be what we are not. But let us, in God's sight and with God's help, be the fine, noble creatures that God intends us to be. And then we shall not have to fly any false colors or to live in any pretense!

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE HURRICANE

Psalm 46: 1—"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

OUR subject this morning, boys and girls, is "The Hurricane." You all, no doubt, read in the papers sometime ago about a very terrible storm in Florida; rain coming down in torrents; and wind blowing a gale, and tearing up trees by the roots, blowing down houses, sweeping away crops, doing untold damage to property, and possibly even taking toll of human life. That is a hurricane. They have bad hurricanes in the West Indies, sometimes. They come once every so often; that is, not every year, but once in several years. And they oftentimes do great damage, and become very fearful and very dreadful catastrophes. I have been in the Virgin Islands, those tiny islands that our country owns in the West Indies, as I have told you several times before. And, though I was not visiting in these interesting islands during a hurricane, I have seen the results of them. My brother and his family lived through one of the worst ones in recent years, and they have told me a great deal about how serious a thing a hurricane can be.

Usually there is a little warning. The weather bureau

can tell when one of these dreadful storms is coming, and the people are all told to make ready for it. Then the wind comes up, and blows faster and faster. The rain falls in torrents, and is driven before the wind until you would think it could break into all the houses and stores and schools and public buildings, and drench them with water. The people close up their houses as tight as possible. Often they nail boards over the doors and the windows to keep out the wind and the water. Frequently, the people leave their homes before the worst of the "blow" comes, and go into the strongest and the safest buildings that they can find. When my brother and his family were in the hurricane, all the people of his neighborhood left their homes, and went to the Naval barracks where the sailors lived and where the marines were stationed. The barracks were in stronger buildings, less likely to be blown down than many of the frail houses. Besides, the barracks were located on lower ground; and it was thought that the terrible wind was less likely to damage buildings located in the shelter of the little hill, than it was the houses that were on top of the hill. And so, for two or three days, the wind blows and the rain falls. All the people have to stay in the barracks or other shelter day and night until the "blow" is over.

Trees are blown down. Great coconut palms, tall and handsome, are broken off like twigs or torn up by the roots. Buildings are blown to pieces and others have roofs taken off or parts of them ripped away from other parts. I saw, some months after the great storm my

brother witnessed, a store that had been blown down, smashed to pieces and all lying in a heap. I also saw a shed that had been toppled over off its foundations; and as it caved in, it fell upon a Ford car that was stored in the lower part. The whole upper story was smashed down, and completely covered the automobile that it now rested on. And I saw a great building which had been blown right off its foundation and shoved out into the middle of the street. Great fields of sugar cane are blown to pieces. Streets and roads and fields are filled with heaps of rubbish. Terrible damage, costing great sums of money to repair, is done everywhere.

But at last the storm passes. The rain lets up and the wind gradually dies down. The sun comes out once more and the earth begins to dry up. The people come out of their shelters and take down the boards from their windows and their doors. The world looks out upon a scene of chaos and destruction. But the storm passes and the destruction is over.

Now, boys and girls, storms come in our lives, sometimes. Things happen to us, evils come upon us, troubles overwhelm us. And sometimes these storms are like hurricanes. It is not real wind or real rain that does us harm. But it may be a real storm just the same. We call it trouble. But it hurts us as badly as a hurricane hurts the countryside. Now in every time of trouble, in every time of storm, let us remember that God is our refuge. Just as people want a shelter or a refuge or a protection in time of a storm of wind and rain, so people want a ref-

uge or a shelter or a protection in time of a storm of trouble. And that refuge or shelter or protection is God! Let us never forget that. That is why I have a text for you today. It is from Psalm 46, the first verse, and this is what it says: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." I hope you will always remember that verse. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." And so, whenever we are in a storm of trouble, let us go to God at once. For in Him we shall find shelter.

And if we find shelter in God, some day the storm of trouble, just like the storm of wind and rain, will pass. Trouble will not always last any more than a hurricane lasts forever. The storm will pass away. The clouds will disappear. The bright sun will again come out. If we take God for our refuge and strength!

CHAPTER XXXV

THE BLOWN-DOWN COCONUT TREE [1]

Isaiah 37: 31—"And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward."

Objects—A picture of a coconut palm (any tropical or semitropical view will, no doubt, show a coconut palm), and a piece of heavy wire, about 18 inches long, bent at a right angle to the left about six inches from the end, and at a right angle to the right about six inches further on.

JUST outside of the beautiful city of Christiansted, on the island of St. Croix in the West Indies, is a wonderful grove of coconut trees; tall, graceful palms, with long, slender trunks. At the top of each tree is a beautiful clump of great palm branches, in the midst of which the clusters of coconuts grow. One evening I visited this lovely grove of coconut palms, during my stay with my brother in the Virgin Islands, about which I have been telling you something from time to time. Here is a picture of a coconut tree. Do you notice how tall and graceful it is? Do you see the great clusters of coconuts at the top, in the midst of the long branches? Well,

[1] This Chapter and Chapter XL were suggested by my brother, Lt. Comm. A. R. Schofield, U. S. N., to whom I give hearty thanks.

the grove that I visited with my brother and his other guests was filled with many of these lovely palms.

We took our supper with us, and ate it picnic-fashion on the beautiful beach down to which the grove extended. And after our picnic, my brother pointed out to me a tree that was growing into the strangest shape I had ever seen. And it is about this tree that I want to tell the boys and girls this morning. I was in the Virgin Islands in 1929, just a few months after the hurricane that blew across the islands and did so very much damage. But the greatest hurricane of recent years was the "blow" of 1916, several years before. Now the great windstorm of 1916 had blown down the large coconut tree that I want to tell you about. The storm was so violent and the wind so strong that it just blew the tree right over and it came down amid its neighbors with a great crash, we may be sure.

But that did not kill nor even discourage the tree—because it went right on growing, and it began at once to turn upward again. The root kept right on growing, and the trunk of the tree turned at a right angle and started to grow upward toward the sun. Here is a little model of the tree that I have made out of bent wire. Here, a little way up the trunk from the ground, is where the wind bent the tree over when the terrible storm of 1916 hit it. You see by this model that the tree was bent over at a right angle as if it were broken off. But it wasn't; and here is where it turned its head up again at another right angle and began to grow straight upward once more, to-

ward the sky. So the result is a tree that grows in three directions, like this model. It first grows straight upward for a way; then, because it was blown down, it grows outward, parallel to the ground and a little way above it, for another distance; then it turns once more, again at a right angle, and grows upward again toward the sun.

Now this tree, with all the trouble it has overcome, is an object lesson to us. It teaches us that we, too, should always strive upward. If something beats us down, let us turn upward again. Never let trouble or difficulty or danger defeat us. Let us make up our minds that we will never be beaten. If trouble comes or disappointment, if things go against us, if storms of life seem to blow us over, let us always determine that we will turn upward again. Always look up. Always grow upward. Always strive to higher and better things.

Another thing to remember. The tree not only turned upward again after it was blown down. It also went toward the sun. That suggests to us that we, too, are to grow toward God; for God is our Sun, God is our Light, God is the Source of our life. Let our lives grow toward Him all the time.

Now there is a text in the Bible which seems almost to have been written to describe this tree that I have been talking about. It is in Isaiah, the thirty-seventh chapter and the thirty-first verse: "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward." Doesn't that give us a

good picture of our tree? Even though it was blown down by the storm, it took root again downward—the roots clung to the earth and kept alive and continued to nourish the tree; and it bore fruit again upward—the trunk turned up and the fruit of the tree was again produced at the top in the branches. So it must ever be with us. No matter what the storms of life do to us, no matter how we may be beaten down, let us remember to take root downward—to keep our feet firmly upon the ground; and to bear fruit upward—to grow up toward God, to bear the fruit of the Christian life.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE MONKEY AND THE COCONUT [1]

Object—A coconut.

I HAVE been telling the boys and girls something about the Virgin Islands in the West Indies and some of the interesting things I saw when I was there on a visit one winter. There are many coconut trees on these islands. I am sure you boys and girls like coconut. You have eaten it in candy, on cakes, or in pies; or maybe you have broken the big, rough shell, like the one I hold in my hand; have poured the "milk" out that is found in the center; and have cut some of the moist, white, fresh meat right out of the shell; and enjoyed it that way. And I suppose also that you all know that these great nuts grow in clusters at the top of handsome, tall palm trees. These beautiful trees usually dot the landscape in almost any tropical locality. And there are many of them in the Virgin Islands.

Now during my visit to these interesting islands that Uncle Sam now owns, I met a very interesting man, a lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps, who once had lived in the Philippine Islands, and who later had been transferred by the Marine Corps to the Virgin Islands.

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[1] The suggestion for this Chapter came to me from 1st Lt. William Quaster, U. S. M. C., to whom sincere thanks are hereby given.

He told me how monkeys are caught in the Philippines. If a person desires to catch one of these mischievous little animals, that scamper through the tropical forests, and run up the trees, and jump from limb to limb, and swing on trailing vines, and hurry over the roofs of houses, he takes a coconut and bores a small hole through the shell into the center. Then he leaves the coconut where a monkey will be sure to find it. Thinking that he is about to get a delicious dinner, the monkey that finds the hole in the coconut thrusts his arm into the hole and grasps the soft, moist meat of the nut inside the shell. But he grasps such a big handful, in his greed and haste, that he is unable to withdraw his hand; for his hand, so full of meat, cannot slip back through the small hole! And he is caught! The nut is too big and heavy for him to run off with; he will not let go the meat he holds in his selfish hand; so he is a prisoner, caught by his own greed!

Too greedy, too selfish, the monkey gets caught. And the very thing that he thought he was going to enjoy so much is the very thing that traps him. He is caught in a trap by his own greed and selfishness. He has defeated his own purpose, for instead of a feast he gets imprisonment. His greed and selfishness destroy him. He destroys himself.

But, boys and girls, do you not see that it is exactly so with us? With us, just as with the greedy monkey, selfishness destroys its own purpose. The thing that selfishness wants most of all is to enjoy itself; but selfishness, instead of enjoying itself, always makes itself mis-

erable. Selfishness wants to be satisfied, wants to increase itself and enjoy itself; but the very thing it wants most of all, that is the thing it destroys. It destroys itself, it destroys us. It brings the opposite of what we want. We want happiness, and selfishly seek after it. We get misery. It is always true. Selfishness destroys itself and destroys us. Let us beware of it. Let us remember the silly, selfish, little monkey with his puffy little hand stuck in the coconut; the victim of his own selfishness and greed!

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE ESCAPED CHICKENS

Matthew 13: 5, 6—"Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away."

OUR text this morning is from the wonderful parable that Jesus told about the sower and the seed that fell into different kinds of ground. The verses for our Children's Sermon are the fifth and sixth in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew: "Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away." Now I hope you can all remember the text, because I am going to tell you a true story, and then speak about the text afterward.

When I was visiting my brother, who is a Naval officer, in the Virgin Islands, an interesting thing happened one day. When he was stationed in the Virgin Islands, which used to be governed by the United States Navy, you will remember, he lived in the beautiful city of Christiansted, on the Island of St. Croix. His house was on a lovely hill, overlooking the blue bay where the harbor was.

Well, back of his house, on the hillside, were his garden and his chicken yard. He had just purchased some new chickens, to be kept along with the few he already had; and the little chicken house and the small chicken pen had to be enlarged. Now the man who was doing the work was rather slow, as a great many people are in that part of the world, and he didn't get along very fast with putting the chicken-wire fence around the new pen. In fact, when evening came, he went home without finishing the fence; which meant that on one part of it there was no wire at all. Well, naturally, before morning came, all the chickens were out of the pen. Twenty-five chickens, all my brother owned, were loose and running wild all over the neighborhood!

The news spread like wildfire through the household and very early in the morning everybody was up and out of doors, hunting for the escaped chickens. The colored cook, whom everybody called "Cookie," and the nursemaid, and the girl that looked after the house, and the little boy who pumped the water from the cistern up to the tank on the roof, and all the family, and all the company hurried out of doors to look for the chickens, help "round them up," and get them back in the pen. Up the hillside, we looked. In all the neighbors' yards. Over the high wall into the street that ran down the hill. Farther and farther away the search extended until the neighbors, too, were out hunting with the family.

Somebody offered a reward of five cents for every chicken found and returned to the pen. But whoever did

was soon sorry for it, because everybody at once claimed the reward; and soon nobody knew which one found which chickens. But at any rate, by night nineteen of the twenty-five chickens were safely back in the pen once more. Why? Some had been found by the searchers and had been forcibly put back into their proper home. Some of the others, when night came, returned of their own accord, weary and hungry, to their own home. But some did not come back! What was the secret? Why, the old chickens, the chickens who knew their home, were the ones who came back. But the new chickens, that had just been purchased, did not know their new home, and these did not come back. It was their proper home, but they did not know it. It was where they belonged, but they did not understand it. Some of them were never found—they didn't know their home—and some of them went back to the man who sold them, thinking, wrongly of course, that that was where they belonged.

Now men and women and boys and girls are like chickens sometimes. Sometimes we wander away, and don't know how to get back to the place where we belong. That is why we should be grounded in the Christian life. That is why we should know our Father's home, our Heavenly Father's home. That is why we should know the difference between right and wrong. For if we are Christians, we are God's children. We belong to God. Where God is, is our home. Now if something goes wrong, if we get into some trouble, if we make a mistake, if we lose our way and don't know where to go or which

way to turn; if we know God, and know His home, and know the difference between right and wrong—then we cannot get lost, then we are sure to come back to Him. If we know Him, and know His law, and know His house, then we cannot get really lost. We shall come home, we shall be able to come back to God. But if we do not know our Father's home, our Heavenly Father's home, then we shall get lost; and when we are in difficulty or danger or trouble, we shall not be able to get back again; we shall be off the track; we shall not come home.

Now this is all the more important for new Christians. The new chickens were the ones that got lost and did not find their way home. So new Christians must be very careful, lest they forget their new estate, forget that they really belong to God; and wander off somewhere, and never really get to the Father's home. Such people are like the seed that Jesus talked about that fell onto the stony ground. It took root quickly and sprung up. But it had no strong roots, it was not well grounded, it was not settled or established. And because it had no depth of root and no real foundation, it was scorched and withered by the sun. People who have no depth of Christianity are the ones who are not settled, who do not know the Father's home, and when they wander away never find the way back.

Let us make sure we know God and know our Father's home. Let us make sure we are grounded in the Christian life. Then we shall not become foolish chickens who do not know the way home!

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE COIN

Galatians 6: 17—"I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

Object—For this sermon I used a number of the five-bit or one-cent pieces of the Danish West Indies, coined by Denmark for the Virgin Islands before the islands were sold to the United States, and gave one of the coins to each child present. But Canadian one-cent pieces or any small coin of any nation having a king would do, or even American coins, with the necessary adaptations to the sermon.

I HAVE been telling the boys and girls a little about the Virgin Islands, and today I have had the ushers give each boy and girl present one of the one-cent or five-bit pieces that used to be used there. I have told you how the United States bought these little islands from Denmark in 1917; and have reminded you of their location, in the West Indies, near Puerto Rico. These three islands, St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John, with a number of tiny islets, mostly too small to have anybody live on them or even to have names, altogether consist of only a small portion of land. Delaware County, a single county in New York State, is eleven times bigger than all the islands put together. And St. Lawrence County is twenty-one times

larger. But our country considered these islands important and paid Denmark $25,000,000 for them, during the great World War, because they are so near Puerto Rico, and are considered a natural outpost of the Panama Canal. You see, they are on the direct line of travel between Europe and the Canal and are what sailors call a natural port of call for ships traveling over this route.

Now if you will look at the little coin that I have given you, you will see that it is labeled for use in the Virgin Islands. These coins were minted by Denmark, when that country owned the islands; and you will be able to read on them the words, "Dansk Vestindien," which is Danish for what we would call in English, "The Danish West Indies." Now these little islands, eleven times smaller than Delaware County, and twenty-one times smaller than St. Lawrence, were the only place in the whole world where these coins were used. When I visited the islands in 1929, these coins were used, along with regular United States money; and were to be legal, for use in the islands, until 1934, according to the agreement that our government made with the Danish West Indian Bank, when the islands were purchased. But now, of course, they are no longer used. But do you not think it is interesting that man would go to such pains for such a little place, as to make coins for use there and nowhere else in all the world? But not only man goes to great pains for a little place. God does, too; and for little people. God provides for the smallest land on earth and for the smallest and meanest man on earth. He gives life to the littlest

island, and he offers salvation to the littlest boy or girl. But that is not the lesson that I wanted to show you from these coins.

I

There are two things that the coin makes us think of—two lessons that we can draw from it. The first one is that any coin, like this one or one of our own, or any bank note or dollar bill for that matter, is a counterfeit, if it is not worth its face value. Now what do we mean by that? Look at the coin. This coin is a real coin and can buy a real article, if it is worth the value stamped on it. A counterfeit or imitation coin might look exactly like this, might say it was worth so much, might fool many people and make them think it was worth what was stamped on its face; but it would not be worth that at all. If you should make a coin that looked and felt exactly like a real United States coin, or that of any other country, and if it was not the real thing, it would only be an imitation, and would not be worth what it says on it.

Now that is also true with us, with boys and girls, and with men and women. Are we the real thing, or are we imitations? People look on us, see our faces, and think that we are real men or real women, real boys or real girls. But are we what we seem to be? Are we real, or are we only half what our faces tell the world we are? Are we real or counterfeit? You know, sometimes a man only seems like a man. For he is really only half a man. Sometimes a boy only seems to be a boy. He is only worth half a boy. Are we the real thing, the thing people think

we are when they look at us; or are we counterfeit, worth less than face value?

II

But there is a second lesson from the coin. A coin, or a piece of paper money for that matter, must have the government that issued it back of it, or it is no good. A United States coin, or a United States dollar bill, is worth what it says on it, only if the United States stands back of that coin, or that piece of paper money. The West Indian money is worth its face value only if the government stands back of it. In France the standard coin is the Franc, and before the great World War it was worth twenty cents in American money. But the government did not stand back of it and today it is worth only five cents. In Germany the standard coin was the Mark, and before the war that, too, was worth twenty cents. But the government did not keep its promises to pay full value to anybody who wanted gold instead of marks; and the value of the mark went down, and down, and down, until it was worth just nothing at all!

But now, this coin has its value maintained. Notice that it has the stamp of the king on it, the seal of King Christian of Denmark.

Now all this suggests to us that we must have some backing, some One powerful and great standing back of us, if we are to be of any value on this earth. Does not that make us think that God, Himself, through Jesus Christ our Lord, is back of us; to help us, and encourage us, and stimulate us; and make us worth something to our-

selves, to others, and to the world? Boys and girls, you will never be worth anything in reality until you stand with God; or, to put it in terms of the coin, until you have the government of God back of you. But if you belong to Christ, then Christ will make you amount to something. Paul tells us that in Galatians, the sixth chapter and the seventeenth verse, where he says, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." If we have Christ's mark on us, if we belong to him, then we will amount to something, then we will have value, then we will have some worth. The little coin in your hand has the stamp of a human king on its face. Remember, boys and girls, that you can have, always, the stamp of the Divine King, Jesus Christ, on you. Let us make sure that we have and we keep the stamp of the King!

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE LEPERS' ORCHESTRA

Acts 16: 25—"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."

Objects—A piccolo or a guitar and/or a short piece of heavy wire bent first to the left and then to the right at right angles to form a design like a flight of two steps.

I HAVE a text for the boys and girls this morning. It is found in the Word of God as it is written in the Book of the Acts, the sixteenth chapter and the twenty-fifth verse: "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them." You will remember, I am sure, that Paul and Silas were thrown into prison at Philippi. These two great missionaries, these two great servants of God, who had carried the truth of Jesus into Europe, were put into prison. And we may be sure that it was a dark, damp, disagreeable prison. It must have been very uncomfortable there. Maybe, even, they were chained to the wall as prisoners often were in those days. They were distrusted, abused, arrested, and in jail! And yet they sang praises unto God! In that dark, damp, disagreeable prison, chained up and under charges, these two great men of God sang at midnight and praised God. Weren't they brave and trusting men?

Now I saw something in a far-off corner of the world that made me think of this text. You may remember that

one winter I was visiting in the Virgin Islands, in the West Indies, Uncle Sam's newest possession. And while I was there, I was invited to visit the Lepers' Asylum, which is located on the Island of St. Croix, not very far from the city where my brother lived. You have all heard of leprosy, I am sure. You have heard of people in the Bible who had this dreadful disease. But maybe you did not think that there are still people who have it. There are some right here in our own country, and there are hospitals for their care in the south. And there are quite a few who have this terrible disease in the Virgin Islands, and this fine little hospital is maintained to care for them. Leprosy is very frightening and very loathsome. It is a disease that eats away the flesh. I saw people in the hospital whose fingers had been eaten off, whose hands and arms were gone, whose legs were destroyed. It is a terrible disease, and in many cases cannot be cured.

Now at the hospital that I visited, the patients lived in tiny houses, all built in long rows, with doors and windows opened to the air and sun. Here and there were little flower gardens to brighten up the place. The men and the women patients were housed in different parts of the hospital grounds; and the entire place was fenced in, so that the patients could not run away, and so that unwanted visitors could not get in. When we visited the hospital, we had to have a nurse take us through the grounds. She told us we would be safe, and would not catch the disease, if we did not touch anything. And when we left, she had us wash our hands in alcohol, so that

we would not carry any germs of the disease away with us on our hands; in case, by accident, we had touched something in the place.

Between the great rows of tiny houses, where the patients lived, was a large open-air space. Here the men and women used to like to walk about, or sit on benches and chat. And the wonderful thing, that every visitor noticed, was the fact that these sick people, many of them doomed soon to die and most of them never to get well, were so very happy and so very cheerful. Truly it put to shame so many of us, who grumble and whine when the very least thing goes wrong with us.

Outdoors there, under the trees, the patients had a little orchestra. There was a man who played a tiny flute, or piccolo, as it is properly called. Another person played the guitar. Another played a native musical instrument which, down there, is called the "scratchy-scratchy." This is a very interesting article made out of a native gourd, about the size of a small pumpkin. When the gourd is dry and hard, little shallow gashes are cut across its face, rather close together. And when the instrument is played, a stick or other suitable material is rubbed up and down across these little slits or gashes on the face of the gourd. A sort of rough, grating sound is thus produced, which serves as a sort of background to the rest of the music, keeping time for it, like a drum. Then, one man had what musicians call a triangle, a small instrument made of a piece of metal bent like a triangle, and beaten with a metallic rod to give a sort of bell sound. Still another

man had a piece of water pipe, bent twice like this little piece of wire, once to the left and once to the right; and having a number of holes drilled into it. He blew into this pipe as into a horn, holding it in front and below his mouth; and he used his fingers to cover up the various little holes to produce different notes, as on a clarinet. Now this sounds like a very peculiar orchestra. But it gave us some beautiful music, and the patients grouped themselves around to enjoy the music it furnished.

I thought then, and I still think now, that it was a wonderful thing for those poor, sick lepers, to make that orchestra out of so little material. I thought that they would put many of us to shame who have all that we want, and more too, and then complain. Here was real music being made out of a gourd and a water pipe, bent and drilled with holes. Here were poor, sick people who made the best of a little. How that reminded me that if they could make much out of a little, so could we! And how happy these patients, in that hospital with the dreaded and incurable disease, were! Are we happy with our lot? Surely, we who have health and resources—much more to do with and much more to enjoy than those poor, sick men and women of the Virgin Islands—should be happy, if they can be! And if they could make real music out of so little material, we should resolve to make the very most out of what God gives to us. If they could make much out of almost nothing, surely we should make more out of our abundance. Make the most of what God gives you. Don't let the poor, sick lepers put you to shame!

CHAPTER XL

THE DONKEY'S COLT

Isaiah 6: 1, 2—"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly."

Boys and girls, I want to tell you this morning about "The Donkey's Colt." The Virgin Islands belong to the United States, as you all know. They are located in the West Indies beyond Puerto Rico—that is, farther out to sea. I have already told you something of my visit there. You may remember that my brother, a naval officer, was once stationed there and was in the government of the islands. Now during my visit to him, we frequently rode across the little island, on which he lived; through the sugar cane fields, and over the tiny hills, and through the quaint cities, and along the magnificent blue water of the magnificent Caribbean Sea. And he would often point out to me some great two-wheeled carts, each one always drawn by a donkey. They were usually huge carts, mounted on great wooden wheels; and they were always filled to overflowing with hay, or sugar cane, or wood, or sometimes

furniture, or household goods. Each one was always drawn by a donkey, who seemed so small beside the big load that one would sometimes think that the cart would topple over backward on its two wheels, and pull the tiny beast that drew it far up in the air, with her little legs dangling under her. Only the cart never did seem to topple over backward, and jerk the little animal up in the air. It only *seemed* as if it would!

Now there was another interesting thing about this huge cart, pulled by the tiny donkey so many times smaller than itself. For usually a still smaller donkey ran alongside the one that was pulling the cart; the smaller animal trotting along contentedly, not hitched to the cart at all, and consequently not pulling any of the load. It was the young colt, going along beside its mother. Everywhere one would see this interesting sight: A small donkey pulling a big cart, with a still smaller donkey trotting along at her side and not pulling any of the load. In the short time that I was in the islands, I saw scores of cases of this thing; and always noted how interesting they were.

But why was there usually a little donkey running along at the side of the larger donkey? Probably the reason was that the mother would not work unless she could have her colt with her. Maybe the owners found that they could not take the young colt away from the mother at such a tender age. But if they let the colt run along beside the mother, then the mother would go back to work; and the colt would be contented, and the owner could get the work done that he had in hand to do. And so it seemed like a

good arrangement, and one would see it being done everywhere.

I

Now my brother pointed out to me that men and women and boys and girls could draw a good lesson from the tiny colt running beside the mother. He reminded me that in one sense that little colt was helping the mother. True, it was not pulling any of the load or really doing any of the work. But it went along and allowed the mother donkey to do the work that her owner wanted her to do. And if the colt did not come along, the mother would not and could not do the work. Now sometimes in our lives we find that we can help others by giving them our companionship. Sometimes when we cannot really do any of the work, possibly because we do not know how, we can still help others by being willing to stand by them and encourage them and cheer them on. That is what the cheering section at a football game really does. It doesn't enter into any of the plays of the game; but it helps win the game by standing by, and giving the support of the presence of friends of the team. Sometimes a friend has a hard job to do. We cannot do it nor any part of it. But we can stand by and give our friendship and our companionship. Only make sure that when you stand by a friend, when he is doing a hard job, you are really helping and not hindering him!

II

But in the second place, sometimes we can help others by giving them what we call moral support. This is even

more than just companionship. This is showing others that we are with them, that we believe in them, that we want to encourage them. This is what we call moral support. Suppose a boy is in trouble over something that happened in school. We may not really do anything to help him, but we can stand by him, show him that we are with him, show him that we believe in him. That is being a real friend. One time a man I knew was in trouble. He was charged with doing something that he did not do. I could not help him out of his trouble very much, but I could stand by him and show him that I knew he was innocent. And I think my standing by him in his time of trouble was a real help to him. You remember about the trial of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his time of greatest need, everyone of his disciples fled—ran away. And the one who was the leader of them all, Peter, denied three times that he even knew him! How much Peter could have helped Jesus, if he had only stood by him in that hour of trial! He couldn't have stopped the trial of the Master of Men, but he could have stood by him and given him moral support!

III

But in the third place, sometimes God wants us to stand ready until He calls us. He may not have a work for us to do right at this moment; but we can serve Him if we stand ready, if we are on call, if we are at hand and attentive, prepared to go at a moment's notice when He does call upon us. This is truly serving God. The cherubim and the

seraphim are special creatures that God has created to serve Him. And the Bible tells us that one of the chief things they do is to stand ready to be sent out on any errand at a moment's notice. And just while they stand ready to serve, they are serving! That's what our text tells us this morning. It is found in Isaiah, the sixth chapter and the first two verses: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly." They were ready to serve God. They were standing ready to be used. And standing ready to be used at a moment's notice is one way, and one of the greatest ways, of serving God.

One of the greatest poems in all the world, written by one of the geratest poets that ever lived, tells us this same truth. Here is the way John Milton's "Sonnet on His Blindness" ends, referring to God:

> "His state
> Is kingly: thousands at His bidding speed,
> And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
> They also serve who only stand and wait."

CHAPTER XLI

MAHOGANY AND BAY RUM

Exodus 4: 2—"And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod."

Objects—A small piece of unfinished mahogany or small strip of mahogany veneer, that can be obtained from any furniture repair shop, or some small piece of mahogany furniture (I used a small tip-top table that came from the Virgin Islands); and a bottle of bay rum (a bottle from the ten-cent store will do).

Boys and girls, you will remember that I have been telling you from time to time of my visit to the Virgin Islands in the West Indies, Uncle Sam's newest possession down in the Caribbean Sea off Puerto Rico; which, during the great World War, our country purchased from Denmark. This morning I want to tell you about two of the most important products of these tiny islands, Mahogany and Bay Rum.

I

First, mahogany. Here is a little tip-top table that was made in the Virgin Islands out of mahogany, the beautiful red wood of the famous tree that grows in hot climates. The wood in this little table grew in these islands and so we call it "native mahogany," because it grew in a tree

in the land where it was later made up into furniture. There is a great deal of beautiful furniture made in these little islands. The mahogany trees are cut down, sawed up into logs, and then sawed again into boards. The boards are then cut into pieces of the proper size for the various parts of the different pieces of furniture to be made. The pieces of wood are then cut and shaped and sawed and made into legs and spindles and table tops and a hundred other parts of furniture. The parts are put together and at last the finished articles are complete. I have seen many of the little furniture shops on the Island of St. Croix in the Virgin Island group, little shops that open up onto the street; and have seen the native cabinetmakers take the boards of rough mahogany, saw them and plane them, work them and shape them, until a beautiful piece of furniture like this table is the result.

II

Here is a bottle of bay rum. I bought this at the ten-cent store and this liquid was not made in the Virgin Islands. But bay rum exactly like it is made there in great quantities. In fact, bay rum is one of the chief products of the islands and one of the chief exports. You know what bay rum is, a kind of toilet water that your fathers sometimes use on their faces after shaving, and that both men and women use on their hair or on their skin. Now there are three main islands in the Virgin Islands, besides a multitude of tiny ones, most of which are so small that nobody lives on them. And it is very

interesting to note how each of the three is connected with the manufacture of bay rum. St. Croix, the largest of the three islands, raises the sugar cane from which the rum is made that is the basis of this toilet water. St. John, the smallest of the three islands, produces the bay leaves, which grow on the bayberry tree and which are necessary to make the finished product. And St. Thomas, the middle island in size and the island that is located in the middle, between the other two, takes the rum from St. Croix and the bay leaves from St. John, and out of them manufactures the bay rum.

Now what lessons do these two interesting products of these three tiny islands in the Caribbean Sea teach us this morning?

1

First of all they teach us the lesson that geography is always teaching us, whenever it points out to us the products of any country or of any region. It is the lesson that we ought to use what we have at hand. Mahogany grows in the Virgin Islands, and so the people there make mahogany furniture. Sugar cane and the bayberry tree grow in the Virgin Islands, and so the people there take what they have, and make bay rum, which is sold all over the world. We ought to utilize the things that are at hand, the things that we have, the things that we can easily get. And here is where our text this morning comes in. You remember how God dealt with Moses. And you remember how God called Moses to serve Him and how afraid and

bashful Moses was. He was afraid he was not well enough trained and well enough equipped. "And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod." This verse is in Exodus 4: 2. And it means that God told Moses that he could and should use what he had, what was in his hand. It was only a rod, a shepherd's crook, but God could make it a mighty weapon by which Moses was to deliver his people out of Egypt. So we are to use what God gives us; dedicate it to God and let Him make it great and useful; and by means of it do His purposes.

2

In the second place, our two products today remind us that we are to be of service where we are. We sometimes think that if we were only in some other place, in China or in Timbuktu, we could be of use to God and to our fellow men. But we can be of service both to God and to man right where we are. There is work to be done for God and help to be given to others right at home, right where we live, right where we are located. We do not have to cross the sea or climb the mountain or cross the desert to be of service. Be of service where you are. In the famous evangelistic services of the famous evangelist Billy Sunday, the people used often to sing a song that taught the same lesson. It began like this, "Brighten the corner where you are"; and the meaning is that you can shine for Jesus, you can do good, wherever you may happen to be, if you only will.

In Mexico they sing this same song in the Spanish language, only there they word it like this, "Shine on the spot where you are." But it means the same thing!

3

And the third lesson is that we should do God's will all the time. Not only when some special service comes up for us to do. Not only when we can make a great showing of some kind. Not only when we can show off our religion. But all the time. We should serve God, we should do His will all the time. You will remember that the Apostle Paul told us this one time when he said to us, "Whether . . . ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

CHAPTER XLII

A BADGE (Communion)

Revelation 14: 1—"And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."

Object—A Red Cross button, or any other badge.

Boys and girls, I have in my hand a badge. It is a Red Cross button, the kind that you see people wearing every year at the time of the annual Red Cross roll call. When we wear it, it shows that we belong to the Red Cross. And just so, there are a great many badges that men and women wear at different times and on different occasions; each one usually denoting that the person wearing it belongs to some organization, to some lodge, to some society. Members of the D. A. R. wear a badge. Members of the American Legion wear a badge. Members of the Masonic Lodge or of the Odd Fellows wear a badge. It shows that they belong.

The great Apostle John, the apostle whom Jesus loved, once saw a wonderful vision of heaven, many years after his Lord was crucified, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. And in his description of that vision, found in the Book of the Revelation, at the fourteenth chapter

and the first verse, he says that those who belonged were marked. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." Those who belonged in heaven, you see, were marked, they wore a sort of badge.

And so it is in Church. Those who belong take communion. That is one of the great purposes of communion, this service to which your parents have come this morning, and in which you are visiting, and which you will shortly observe. And that makes communion a sort of badge, don't you see? For those who take it show, by so doing, that they belong to the Church. But there is another badge that Church members wear, another token that shows that they belong. This other badge is to do what Christ wants them to do. When we do what pleases Christ, then we are showing to all the world, just as much as if we wore a sign on our coats, that we belong to Christ, that we belong to his Church.

Now it may be, boys and girls, that some of us are too young to understand just what it really means to belong to the Church. We may not fully know just what Church membership stands for. That is why we do not join the Church until we are old enough to understand exactly the meaning of such a step. But we are not too young to love Jesus. We may be too young to join his Church, but we are never too young to love him, who loved us so much, who did so much for us, who died for us!

And we can show that we love him. Even the smallest

and the youngest child can show to all the world that he loves Jesus. We all can wear a sort of badge to show that. Do you want to know how? Well, I will tell you. We can wear the badge that shows the world we love Jesus by doing what he wants us to do. That's the Christian badge. Every time we do a thing that Jesus wants done, we are wearing that badge, we are showing that we love him.

And another Christian badge is a smile. The person who loves and serves Jesus is the truly happy person, the person who can wear a truly Christian badge. Bad people are never really happy. I wish you would always remember that, dear children. People who do not love Jesus and who do not try to do his will are never really happy. True happiness comes from obedience to the will of God. And that's what I mean when I say that the Christian smile is a Christian badge.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE AUTOMOBILE

Psalm 119: 105—"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Object—A toy automobile.

FIRST, this morning, I want to read the boys and girls a text and then I want to talk to them about the Automobile. The text is from the Bible, the Word of God. It is found in the one hundred nineteenth Psalm at the one hundred fifth verse. I hope that all of you will learn this verse if you do not already know it. For it is one of the finest verses in the whole Book: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Now, how many of you boys and girls have ever ridden in an automobile? How many of you have ever seen one? Aren't those the silliest questions? For of course, you all have seen automobiles, thousands of them; and of course, all of you have ridden in automobiles, maybe hundreds of times. So at least I do not have to tell you what an automobile is, even though I have brought a toy one to show you. But now I am going to ask you a question that is not a silly one. Did you know that people are like automobiles? Did you know that each life is very much like an automobile? Now that may seem like a silly ques-

tion to you, but it really isn't. And I am going to show you why.

Consider the automobile for a moment. It has an engine. That is the thing that makes it go. That is the motive power. That is the machinery that makes it an automobile, that makes it move. But now every human life has within it something like the engine in an automobile. There is something within us that makes us go, that causes us to do things. We might call the engine within the human life purpose, or motive, or ambition. We have a certain purpose and that purpose makes us do certain things to carry the purpose out. We have what we call a motive, a reason for doing things. Now that motive makes us do the things that will carry forth its aim. Or we say we have ambition. We want to be something or we want to do something. That very desire to be, or to do, makes us perform certain acts. It is like an engine. It makes us do things; it makes us go places; it moves us. But there are different kinds of engines in different cars. Some are weak and some are powerful. So it is with the human engine within the human life. Sometimes the motive or purpose that moves us may be weak or bad. Then we will go wrong, or we will not get anywhere. But sometimes the motive or purpose that moves us is good. Then we move forward toward the goal of our desire. And there is a motive that is best of all. That is to obey Christ; to follow Christ; to please him. If that is the engine that moves our lives, we will go forward

always and we will go the farthest. That is the one engine that will carry us to our goal.

In the second place, an automobile needs gasoline to feed the engine, to keep the engine going. The engine makes the car go. But there must be some fuel to make the engine go. And it is so with life. The gasoline, the fuel that makes the engine of human life go, is prayer. Prayer feeds our purpose; prayer makes the motive within us keep running; prayer builds up our ambition. For us, then, prayer is like gasoline because it keeps the engines of our lives going. And just as the car will stop as soon as it runs out of gas, so our progress and our movement will stop when prayer ceases. The automobile cannot run on air. It must have fuel. The Christian life cannot run on air, either. It must have prayer.

But there is a third thing about an automobile that makes us think of a person. That is the steering wheel, which turns the car. There would be no sense whatever in having the automobile run if it did not go where we wanted it to go. And the steering wheel tends to that matter for us. It turns the car, and directs it where we want it to go; and where it must go, unless it runs us into trouble. Now we each have a steering wheel within the automobile that I have called life. Our steering wheels we call our consciences. Our consciences—you boys and girls know what conscience is, that voice of God that speaks inside of you—turn us from the wrong to the right. Our consciences tell us which way to turn. They show us how to steer clear of the ditch, how to keep on

the road, how to avoid evil and walk in the path of righteousness.

Another part of a car that interests us greatly is the lights. They are needed in the dark to enable the driver to see where he is going and to keep the car and himself out of danger. But so life is with us. It is as if we were moving in the dark. We know not which way to turn. We know not where to go—*until* we turn on the lights. What are the lights that show us the way of life? They are the Bible. The Bible will show us the road we should travel; the Bible will show us what to keep away from. The Bible will show us where to go. That is what our text means when it says, speaking of the Bible, God's Word, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Another thing an automobile has to have is brakes. For the car not only has to go, but it also has to stop. And sometimes it has to stop quickly, in order to avoid hitting something or somebody, and to prevent wrecks and smash-ups. Indeed, the brakes are among the most important parts of a car. And sometimes, even when we do not need or want to stop, the car might need to slow down, in going around a curve, in meeting another car, in coming to a crossing, or in many other circumstances. And here is where the brakes come in. And it is so in life. Often we find we must stop doing a certain thing or going in a certain direction. Often we discover that we need to slow down and just not go so fast in certain matters or in certain places. And here is where we need to apply the brakes.

But what are the brakes in a human life? They are other people. They are the advice we get from others and the example we see in others. They are the Church. All these things will help us from going too fast and will help us stop when we need to stop.

And so we find that life is very much like an automobile, after all. Now there are many more parts of a car that might make us think of features in our lives. A car needs wheels. We need legs to carry us about. A car has a body. We have bodies. And so on, and so on. But we will not go into all these things. It will be enough if we remember the five things that I have already suggested to you. A human live is like an automobile because it has an engine to make it go: purpose, or motive or ambition; because it needs gasoline or fuel to feed the engine: prayer; because it needs a steering wheel to direct it along the right road: conscience; because it has lights to show it the way and keep it out of the ditch: the Bible; because it needs brakes to slow it down or to stop it when needed: advice and example, the Church. Maybe, after this, you will think of some of these things when you ride in an automobile!

CHAPTER XLIV

THE JUNE BUG

How many of you boys and girls know what a June Bug is? That's right, put up your hands! I see that you all know what it is I want to talk to you about this morning. You all know these great, black beetles with their hard shells and buzzing wings that fly about these warm, early summer nights, attracted by the lights, flying into our open doors, and generally making themselves nuisances.

Well, last night, as I was working in my study, one of these great black bugs flew against the window with great violence. The window was closed. But no doubt the stupid fellow was attracted by the light inside and, thinking that he could get to it, flew against the glass. Now I do not know how badly the impact of his big body against the glass window hurt the June Bug, though it did make a great deal of noise. I do not think it hurt the creature very much. But it did make me think how foolish that creature was. And then I happened to think that human beings are sometimes just as foolish. And I am going to tell you how.

I

In the first place, that big, ugly, black bug was trying to do something that he could not do and that he should have

known that he could not do. He was trying to fly right through the glass windowpane and get to the light. Now a bug cannot fly through glass. A bug is not made to fly through glass. There are a great many things that a bug can do, but this is not one of them. And so I say it was very foolish for him to try to do something that he could not do.

But are we not foolish in the same way oftentimes? Don't we, boys and girls, and sometimes our fathers and mothers, too, try to do things that we are not supposed to do, that we know we cannot do, that God does not intend us to do, that we were never made to do? Let us not be so foolish. Let us not try to do things that we cannot. The June Bug cannot do many things that a monkey or a lion can. There are many things the monkey can do that the lion cannot and many things the lion, the King of Beasts, can perform that the monkey never can. And there are many things that the June Bug and the monkey and the lion can do that you and I cannot and that we are not supposed to try. So let us not be foolish. Let us not attempt things that we know we can never perform.

II

But there was a second thing about that foolish June Bug that made me think of people. And that was that he was trying to do and wanting to do something that was bad for him. He wanted very much to get at the light. And he was trying with all his might to do it. Now it was not only foolish for him to try to do something that he

could not, fly through the glass. But it was also foolish for him to want something that was bad for him, and try so hard to get it. For suppose he had reached the light. It would have done him no good, but surely would have done him much harm. For if the light had been an open flame, a candle, or an oil lamp or a gas light, he would certainly have been badly burned and probably killed. But my light was an electric light. And still the truth remains that if he had got into the room to the light, it still would have been bad for him. Because even though the light itself might not have burned him, I would not have wanted him buzzing around my head and I would certainly have caught him and probably put him to death. So no matter what kind of a light it was he was after it would have been a bad thing for him had he reached it. That is why I say it was simply foolish for him to want to get there and to try so hard to do so.

But then, men and women and boys and girls are exactly like that many, many times. We want things that we know are bad for us. And sometimes we try very hard indeed to get them. What could be more foolish? We know perfectly well that some things are bound to hurt us. They always hurt everybody who ever has had them. And still we want them and try desperately hard to get them. I do not need to mention them. You know some of the things that I mean.

But sometimes, my dear boys and girls, we really do not understand how bad certain things would be for us if we did get them. And here is where the advice and help of

older people come in. Older ones can often tell us the dangers and the pitfalls ahead of us. If that June Bug could have understood and would have listened, I could have told him how much harm the light would do to him. So our parents and our teachers and our Sunday-school teachers and our pastor can often point out to us the real dangers in some of the things that we want very badly and sometimes try very hard to get. That is why it is always good to listen to the advice of older people, who have seen more of the world than we have and who can give us good advice. Let us never be stupid and thoughtless like a silly June Bug.

CHAPTER XLV

THE MOUSETRAP

Proverbs 1: 17—"Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."

Object—A small, spring-type mousetrap.

In the Word of God as written by the hand of Solomon, in the Book of Proverbs, the first chapter and the seventeenth verse is the boys' and girls' text for this morning: "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird." In this text the wise old king is saying that if a hunter, trying to catch a bird with a net, sets the net so that the bird can see it and know what it is, he is wasting his time. For the bird will be wiser than he and will not walk into the net. If you want to trap birds or animals, you have to hide the net or trap and not let them know what it is they are flying or walking into. That is why a hunter covers his steel trap with boughs; why the lion hunters, who dig great pits for the animals to fall into, cover the pits with limbs of trees and cover these with dirt and grass so that the lion will walk into the trap not knowing what it is. A bird would be foolish indeed to enter directly into a trap if he knew what it was.

Here is a spring mousetrap. You all have seen them work. This little wire arm folds back and is caught by

the straight wire that is hooked over it. A tiny piece of cheese or meat is placed on this little catch. And when the mouse starts to nibble the bait, snap goes the trap and the wire arm springs forward and catches him by the neck. But any mouse who would know what this trap would do to him would be silly to walk into it. And any person who sets such a trap would be silly to do it if the mouse he was after saw him do it and knew what it was for. "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."

But often boys and girls are more foolish than birds or mice. For often we fly directly into the net that we know is set for us. Often we walk deliberately into the trap that we know is there for the express purpose of catching us. Because Satan is always trying to trap us. And sometimes we are just foolish enough to be caught by him.

I

But, boys and girls, we must remember that Satan does not always set the same trap. He is a very clever enemy and uses different kinds of traps. For example, the trap he sets may be something we want very badly. We see an apple and would just love to have it. Satan comes to us and whispers in our ear, "If you want that apple so badly, why not steal it?" This is the Devil's trap. And whoever walks into it becomes a thief.

II

Or again, we may be in trouble. Something may have gone wrong and we are worried about it. How are we

ever going to get out of it? How good it would be if we were only free from it! And Satan comes to us and says, "I can tell you the way out of that trouble. Just lie out of it. Nobody will know the difference." And whoever walks into that trap becomes a liar. And before long he lies again and the lies are discovered—they always are—and before he knows it nobody will trust him about anything. His reputation will be ruined. No one will believe him. Satan will have caught him.

III

But Satan has another trap. He may come to us and tell us that it is fun to swear; that swearing will make us appear grown-up. And if we walk into that trap, we will dishonor God and people everywhere will call us stupid. A person who can't think, swears. A person who does not love God, takes His name in vain. And the boy or girl who yields to Satan's invitation to step into the trap of swearing not only dishonors God but also shows that he just doesn't know how to think, that he is dumb. There is nothing more stupid than swearing. Don't walk into Satan's trap!

IV

Still another trap of the Evil One is that he may say to us that a certain thing is good, while behind the good thing all the while there hides a bad thing. For example, Satan may come to us and tell us that it would be a fine thing to go to a certain place to which our parents have forbidden us to go. Now maybe it does look good. Maybe the

place does seem inviting to us. But behind that good place would be disobedience to our parents, who have forbidden our going there. This is just a trap. Satan tries to make us think the thing is very good. But in reality he is trying to make us do something that is very bad. Look out for his trap!

V

And if none of these traps catch us, Satan has another one ready to set. Not only will he hide a bad thing behind a good thing. That is the trap we have just been talking about. But he will also make a bad thing look like a good one. He will make a bad thing seem very attractive and very desirable to us. The cigarette, the cheap dance hall, the poolroom, the saloon, the flask of whisky at a party, the cocktail offered us by some smart person, the wine at some fancy dinner are all bad things; bad and nothing else. But sometimes Satan makes them appear very lovely and very beautiful and very attractive. But it is a trap. And so are many other things that he dresses up in stylish clothes and beautiful coverings to make us think that they are what they are not.

And so in many ways Satan tries to catch us. WATCH OUT FOR HIS TRAPS. Don't ever be a silly bird or a stupid mouse and walk right into the trap that the Evil One has set for you. For you know the trap is there. Don't be so dumb as to step deliberately into it!

CHAPTER XLVI

THE CAMEL'S NOSE

I WANT to talk to the boys and girls today about "The Camel's Nose." How many of you know what a camel is? I do not mean the cigarette! I mean the animal that is man's great friend in all Oriental countries, the animal with the hump on his back, the great "ship of the desert" as they call him because he can cross the great sandy wastes, the animal who can get along without water for such a long time. There are many interesting things about a camel. But I want to tell you a very old and a very famous story, a story that the Arabs tell about the Camel's Nose.

Once upon a time, so the story runs, on a very cold night when an Arab had gone to bed in his little tent, he discovered that his camel had come to the door and asked to be let in. The night was cold and the camel was tired of standing outside the tent. He wanted to come inside and get warm with the Arab, his master. But the tent was very small and there was not room for him. So the Arab simply told him that he would have to stay outside.

"But I am so very cold," the camel complained. "Won't you let me put my nose inside the flap of your tent? That is all I will ask. Let me put my nose inside and get that warm. Then I will be content. My nose is the coldest part of me and I must get it warm or I shall be dreadfully

sick." And by the time he was done talking, his nose was inside.

"Well, surely," thought the Arab, "there can be no harm in that. His nose will take up so little room that I guess we won't be too crowded." And so he said nothing to the animal.

But once his nose was safely and fully inside the tent, the camel was not satisfied and decided to go farther. "This is a great help, thank you," he said to his master. "But it would be so much better if you would only let me put my whole head inside. My nose feels better, but my head is pretty cold. It will not take up much room. I will just push it through the tent-flap. My ears and my eyes and my jowls are so cold I cannot stand it unless I can put my head inside the tent." And the Arab consented and the camel had his whole head inside the master's tent.

But after the head came the neck, and after the neck came the shoulders, and after the shoulders came the hump and the hind quarters and the tail! Before the poor Arab knew what was happening, the whole body of the greedy camel was inside the tiny little tent. But the tent was so small that the beast cried out, "You were quite right. There is not room for us both in here. So I think you will have to get out." And out the Arab went into the cold, because there was not enough room in the tent for himself and his camel! He started by letting in only the nose, and before he knew it the whole animal was inside, and he was out!

Now that, my boys and girls, is exactly the way that evil

comes into our lives. The Arab never intended that the whole camel should be allowed to come into his tent. But he allowed the animal to put his nose in, and before he realized what he had done he found that the whole beast was there and he was out! Now we never intend that wrong and wickedness and evil shall come into our lives. But sometimes we just let in the nose, and before we realize what is happening the whole beast is inside! That is the way it is with smoking, for example. We never intend that we shall get a dirty habit that makes us slaves and that we couldn't give up if we wanted to. No, indeed. We think we will just let one little cigarette in. We begin in such a small way. But it is like the camel's nose. We never start out to be drunkards. Nobody ever did start out to be a drunkard. He just took one tiny drink, he just let in the camel's nose. But the evil habit was not content to have only its nose in the life, so it came in the rest of the way. The only way to cure the evil of liquor is never to start it. Never touch it and you will be safe.

So it is with a number of other things. Staying away from church and Sunday school, for example. When you start out with such a bad habit as that, you don't think you are going to do it often, or let it become the regular thing to stay away from God's house and from the school where we study God's Word. But once you start it, the habit grows. The camel's nose is followed by his head, his neck, his hump, and his whole body! This is true of any sin, no matter what it is. It is true of gambling. Boys

and girls, never start gambling. Do not do the very least, little bit, and the ugly habit will never get you. So with disobedience to parents and teachers and disrespect of elders. Don't ever let the habit start.

Remember the camel's nose whenever you are tempted to do what at the time seems to you to be a little wrong, a tiny sin, a small evil. Remember the camel's nose, for the little sins and the tiny evils and the small wrongs are just the ones that grow up into big ones! Keep the camel out of the tent of your life. Remember the camel's nose!

CHAPTER XLVII

TRUSTING THE TRAIN

Object—A picture of a locomotive or a railroad train, or a toy locomotive or train.

Not long ago I happened to be in the City of Philadelphia and I wanted to go to see my mother, in Warren, Pennsylvania. I decided to take the train and to go at night. So I bought my ticket and a ticket for a berth or bed in a sleeping car. I knew that when my train came along I could get in the sleeping car, could go to bed in my berth and to sleep, and the next morning wake up and get out of the train in the town where I wanted to go. So I went to the railroad station, went up onto the platform and waited for my train to come from New York. When the time came, a long train pulled into the station and came to a stop alongside the platform where I was standing. On this train were a number of sleeping cars. A large sign on the platform beside the train told where the different sleeping cars on that train were going. One car was going to Chicago; one to Cleveland; one to Detroit; one to Buffalo; one to St. Louis; one to Cincinnati; one to Oil City, Pennsylvania; one to Clarksburg, West Virginia. There was quite a crowd of people waiting to get on the train, all going to different cities. When the train came to a stop, the various cars opened their doors and the people

got in, each one going into the proper car to take him to the destination he had in view. And after the train was well under way again, each person went to bed in the proper car, and each person went to sleep, and each person got up the next morning, and dressed and got out of the car in the city where he wanted to be. All of those cars started on the same train out of Philadelphia, but the next day found one of them in Chicago; another in Cleveland; another in Detroit; another in St. Louis; another in Cincinnati; still another in Oil City; and the last one in Clarksburg, West Virginia. And the person who wanted to go to Chicago was careful not to get into the car that went to Clarksburg, West Virginia. And the person who wanted to go to Detroit stayed out of the car that went to Buffalo. Each person got into his proper car and each person got out of it at his proper place.

Now that means, do you see, that everybody on that train had to trust, and trust very hard, and trust a great many people? We all trusted that we could go safely to bed in the night and wake up in the morning and be safe and sound in the place we wanted to be. We all trusted the train. And we trusted all the men who helped run that train and carry all those cars to the various cities they were bound for. We trusted the porter, the colored man who made up our beds for us in the car. We trusted the conductor, the man who took our tickets and in whose charge the train really was. We trusted the engineer who made the engine go, and the fireman who kept the boilers hot in the engine; and all the engineers and all the firemen on

all the engines that pulled the various other trains that those different sleeping cars were attached to during the night. We trusted the brakeman. We trusted the flagman. We trusted the switchmen who turned the various switches along the way and directed the train this way or that. We trusted all the signalmen who fixed the signals along the way to direct the train. We trusted the trackmen who repaired the tracks, and the trackwalkers who kept watch along the track for broken rails, etc. We had to trust all these people, and a great many others we couldn't think of, to take us all safely and surely to the various places we wanted to reach. We trusted the train and it took us where we wanted to go.

Now God is like that train. We all start out in life alike. But some of us are bound for doctors, some for bankers, some for lawyers, some for nurses, some for farmers, some for teachers, some for housewives, some for ministers, some for missionaries. And we all must trust God to take us to our destination in life. God will carry us along, God will take us in the direction we want to go, God will get us there if we trust Him. We are willing to trust the train and all the men who make it run and who keep it safe when we want to go from one place to another. Why should we not trust God who will keep us and help us and direct us and bring us at last to our goal? Trust Him and be not afraid and He will take your life and bring you to the spot you desire.

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE FISH RUN

Ezekiel 47: 9—"And there shall be a very great multitude of fish."

I WANT to speak to the boys and girls this morning about the Fish Run. There is a text that I want them to look up when they get home which refers to fish. It is found in God's Word as it is recorded in the Book of Ezekiel, the forty-seventh chapter and the ninth verse, at about the middle of the verse, "And there shall be a very great multitude of fish."

I saw a very great multitude of fish the other day. And that's what I am going to tell you about. We drove over to Pope's Mills (St. Lawrence County, New York) to see the Fish Run. You all know that Fish Creek runs through the village of Pope's Mills on its way to Black Lake. When we were there, Fish Creek was full of large fish called pike. We walked along the side of the small stream. We crossed two little bridges that span it. We went into the old mill that used to stretch itself across one swiftly-flowing branch of the stream, and between whose decaying timbers we could look down into the water. From low places and from high, we gazed into the creek and everywhere we saw fish. Many of them were large, some 12 or 15 inches in length. Most of them were fat and sleek,

with bright, gleaming eyes. None of them seemed to be moving very fast, but in places they were so close together that hundreds of them could be seen in one tiny patch of water and scores of them touched each other as they proceeded through the water. The water is not deep and their gleaming bodies and their bright eyes and their swiftly-moving tails could be plainly observed. It was a wonderful sight—thousands of these fish, moving up the stream, body to body, packed in "like sardines," literally filling the creek with their sleek bodies. At this particular time of year it is the pike that are "running" up the stream. The pickerel had already, some days before, gone out of the lake up the stream and after several days gone back into the deep waters of the lake. It was not quite time for the suckers. So all the fish that we saw were pike. They do not live in this stream. Their home is Black Lake and they come out of the lake and "run" up the creek as far as the little waterfall just above the village of Pope's Mills. And in the clear, deep, swiftly-running water at the bottom of the falls, they lay their eggs. Then, with their eggs laid in the waters of the little stream, the great fish return to their homes in the depths of Black Lake.

While we were there looking at the multitude of fish, we heard a story that some of the fish actually jump part way up the falls. The falls are not very high. The water dashes over a little ledge of rocks and leaps two or three feet to rocks below, and then takes another leap to rocks on still a lower level. And it might be possible for some of the stronger fish to leap part way up these falls to

one of the lower ledges of rock and remain there long enough to lay their eggs. But we did not see any of the fish do that trick, and I am not sure that they can. The Pike is not noted for leaping up falls. But the fish that is called the salmon is. We know for a fact that the salmon do go up falls, sometimes leaping ten or twelve feet and sometimes, when they fail to make the leap in the great western rivers, they fall back to die. But the salmon is a more wonderful fish than the pike and he can do more wonderful things. Observers tell us that thousands upon thousands of salmon actually do leap up the falls that stand in their way, when they are "running" up a river to their spawning beds.

Now Fish Creek is not a big stream nor a long one. The spot where we saw the pike is only a few rods from Black Lake. They do not have far to swim to get to the place where they lay their eggs. With the salmon in the west it is different, for these mighty fish swim miles and miles from the sea, where they ordinarily live, to get to the places in the river where they deposit their eggs. These great fish live in the depths of the Pacific Ocean. But when it is time to lay their eggs, they go up the Columbia River and the Snake River and the Salmon River as far as the Sawtooth Mountains in the State of Idaho. And this is a distance of over a thousand miles. They go over a thousand miles to lay their eggs! And we read that in Alaska, this same variety of fish, the mighty salmon, swims up the Yukon River for 2,250 miles to reach the spawning beds. What a wonderful thing a fish is to know

enough to do this once a year, and to travel 2,250 miles up a river to lay its eggs!

Now why does the fish do this? Why does the pike "run" out of Black Lake up Fish Creek for several rods to lay its eggs? Why does the salmon "run" out of the Pacific Ocean 1,000 miles up the Columbia River or 2,250 miles up the Yukon to lay its eggs? Why, because God tells it to do so! Men call it "nature," that sends the fish on these long journeys. Sometimes we call it "instinct." But whether you call it "nature," or "instinct," the fact remains that God is back of it. God has put the nature into the fish, God has given the fish the instinct that causes it to do what it does. And if the fish did not do what its nature calls upon it to do, if it did not obey the voice of God within it, the race would die. Not only would the individual fish that disobeyed the voice of nature or the voice of God die, but the *whole race* of fish would die out. There would be no young; there would be no new fish born to continue the life of the race.

Now that is a lesson for us, boys and girls. God tells us what to do, too. We ought to do what God wants us to do. We ought to do what God says. If we do not, if we fail Him, then we are sure to suffer and others are sure to suffer as well. If the fish do not do what nature provides for them, they suffer and others suffer too. They die and the race dies out; there are no new fish. So it is with us. If we disobey God's laws, we ourselves suffer and *other people* suffer likewise. God's provisions are best. Let us follow them!

CHAPTER XLIX

A BUILDING 102 STORIES HIGH

Isaiah 55: 8, 9—"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

We have all seen some tall buildings, I am sure. We often see buildings three stories high, or four or five or six. But the other day I went to the top of one that is 102 stories high. It is the famous Empire State Building in New York City. You have all heard of it and some of you, I am sure, have seen it. It is one of the most famous buildings in the world and it is the highest. I wanted to go to the top, for it is a wonderful experience to be on top of such a high building, and there is a glorious view from such a high point. And so, when I was in New York City, I went into the Empire State Building and found the elevator that people take when they want to go to the roof. But I was surprised to find that it was not just one elevator that I needed to get there, but three!

I went into one elevator and went up inside the center of the building to the eightieth floor. Here I changed from the elevator that I took at the bottom into one that was a little smaller and went up six more floors, to the

eighty-sixth floor. Here I got out and found an observatory, a sort of room with great glass windows that one could look out and see glorious sights below in all directions. From this level I took a third elevator, much smaller than either of the other two, and went up to the 102d floor. Here, once again, I got out and here, once again, I found an observatory. I was at the top of the mighty building. I had risen 1,248 feet above the street. I was on the 102d floor. And in every direction I could look out of wonderful windows and down on wonderful sights.

I had never been so high above the ground in my life before and I had never seen such wonderful things. It is hard to describe the glorious sights that met my eyes from that great height. Looking in one direction, far below me, I could see the mighty East River, that great, wide stream of water that separates New York City from Brooklyn and Queens. There it was, far below me, winding in and out between the thickly-settled cities on either side. I could see the great docks jutting out into the stream, and the mighty bridges that span it. Looking another way, I gazed down upon the Hudson River, majestic, huge, wonderful; a mighty stream that divides New York from New Jersey. Looking still another way, I could see the great Bay, far below me, gleaming in the sunlight, with great ocean liners floating upon its bosom. Across the Hudson I could see New Jersey with her many built-up cities and towns. Across the East River I could see Brooklyn, a tremendous city with her thousands of buildings, her many streets, and her great population. 'Way

up town, I could see the tower of the Chrysler Building, one of the greatest and tallest buildings in the whole world, but not so tall as the Empire State. 'Way down town, I could see the tall, stately tower of the famous Woolworth Building, until a few years ago the tallest building in the world, but now looking rather small and insignificant in contrast to the mighty Chrysler Building that I had just seen and the mightier one that I was on.

But the interesting thing was how small everything down on the ground looked to me, who was so high up in the air. I saw thousands of automobiles in the narrow streets far below me, automobiles moving swiftly along the great avenues or parked quietly at the curbs. But they all looked as small as flies. I saw thousands of people on the streets, but they were so far below me that they looked no bigger than pins. I saw the top of the great Pennsylvania Hotel, far below me, but it was so far down and looked so small that I could not believe that it was one of the largest hotels in the world. I could see the elevated railway tracks that are built above some of the streets. But you see they were about 101 stories below me and they looked like little ribbons, stretched along above the highways; and the tiny trains, moving over the tracks here and there, looked like little make-believe trains on little make-believe tracks. And moving majestically on the bosom of the majestic Hudson River, or sailing out to sea through the mighty New York Bay, I could see giant ocean liners, great ships that hold thousands of people and are like little cities afloat. But they were so far below me and

seemed so far off that they looked like little toys that children were sailing on little brooks. Everything looked so small; so far away; so different!

And I thought to myself, now that is something of the way God must see. He must see things differently from the way we do. God sees from above. We see only from below. Besides this, God can see more things at one time than we can. If I had been on the ground looking at the Hudson River, I could not have seen the East River or the Bay at the same time. But from the top of this tall building, I could see all three bodies of water at the same time. I could see the Hudson and the East River and New York Bay, and a multitude of other things, like ships and automobiles and people and buildings and bridges and elevated railway trains all at one time. And so, while it did not explain it all fully to me, it made me think that never again would I wonder how it could be that God could see all at once, while man so often can see only a very little. And that made me think of the verse in the Bible that tells us that God sees and God thinks differently from us because God sees from above. This wonderful text is in God's Book, in the Prophecy of Isaiah, the fifty-fifth chapter and the eighth and ninth verses. I trust you all either know these verses already or will learn them promptly. Here is what they say: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

CHAPTER L

THE ELEVATOR WITHOUT A LIGHT

John 8: 12—"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

I

Not long ago I was in the city of Philadelphia. I had an errand to do in a certain office building on one of the upper floors, so I went into the building and entered the elevator. The electric light bulb that illuminated the elevator had apparently burned out, so there was no light in the car. It was like a small, square, dark box. I rode in it seven floors, in practically total darkness all the way, with only a light flashing by as we passed floor after floor. At last we came to the seventh floor. The operator brought the elevator to a stop, opened the door, and I went out. As I stepped out into the brightly lighted hallway of the seventh floor, the operator of the elevator remarked to me, "You don't appreciate a light until it goes out."

II

And as I thought about his remark, I thought how true it was. We don't really appreciate a light until we need it and it goes out. And there are a great many things in life

like that. Sometimes the very best things in life are not appreciated by us until we lose them. Now it should not be that way; but it often is, I have discovered. And you will discover that, too, as you grow older and observe how life works.

For example, there is your home. Now all of you have comfortable homes. You have a place to live, with all the heat and light that you need, and with comfortable beds to sleep in, and with enough good food to eat. You have parents that love you and care for you. You have comfort and beauty around you. And yet sometimes, do you not just take your home for granted? If you should lose it, if you should have to leave it, if you did not have a home, then you would really begin to realize what you had lost and you would begin to understand what a wonderful thing a good home is. And sometimes people do lose their homes; sometimes people do have to leave them. Then they appreciate them and realize what a blessing a good home is.

I think it is so sometimes, also, with school. We don't like school. Some of us say we hate it. But if we had to lose it, if we had to get along without schools, if we had no place to learn how to read and how to figure accounts and how to understand the world we live in, we would begin to realize how important school is for us.

So with our parents. We love our parents, if we stop to think about it. But often we do not stop to think. We just take them for granted and accept all they do for us and all they give us and all they mean to us with-

out even so much as a "thank you." But when we lose one or both of them, then we appreciate them! The boy who has no father and the girl whose mother is dead both can tell you how lucky you are to have your parents!

But I think this is also true of our appreciation of Christ. Christ is the Light of the world. He tells us that himself in our text, John 8: 12: "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." But parts of the world see the Light of the world better than other parts. And those who live where this great Light shines do not appreciate it, until they go to some part of the world where Christ is not known and his light does not shine. We who live in Christian countries take Christ sometimes for granted, and we do not realize how dark the world can be until we travel into some country that does not acknowledge Him.

And so it is with individual lives. If you take Christ into your life, you will have the Light of Life. And the time to take that Light into your life is now, when you are young. For if you do not take Christ now, later in life you will regret it. You may not realize it today; but without him your life will be in darkness and some day you will realize it, and know that if you had taken him when you were young, you would have had the Light of Life. You do not need to live in darkness. You can receive the Light of Life. Take him now.

CHAPTER LI

A ROAD MAP

Isaiah 30: 21—"This is the way, walk ye in it."

Object—A road map published by any of the gasoline companies and given with the purchase of gasoline at any filling station.

Boys and girls, I hold in my hand this morning an object with which all of you must be familiar if your parents have an automobile or if you ever go riding in a friend's car. For it is a very necessary article of equipment to anybody who is taking an automobile trip. It is a road map. These maps are published by the different oil companies and can be obtained free at any filling station with the purchase of gasoline. On them are marked out the roads of any given state or section that the map covers, and the longer the journey you take or the stranger the territory you go through the more you need this map. Now I want to tell you something about one of these maps this morning. But before I do I want to give you a text and tell you where you can find it when you get home and look it up in your own Bible. For I hope that every Sunday the boys and girls of the congregation take home their calendars and look up the text for their children's sermon. The text today is from the

Book of Isaiah, the thirtieth chapter and the twenty-first verse, the middle of the verse: "This is the way, walk ye in it." Now don't you think that is a pretty good text for a talk about a road map? For the road map shows you the way to go and tells you, not exactly to walk in it, but at least to ride in it!

I

A road map shows us the way to go. It has the road all pictured out before our eyes so that when we drive an automobile we can make no mistake, but will be able to go on the right road in the right direction. That is what the map is for. It shows us the way to go. Now the Bible is like that for life. If the road map shows us the right way to go on a journey, the Bible shows us the way to go on the bigger and more important journey we call life. Life itself is a journey, and for it we need a guide or a map, something to show us the way. This is what the Bible does. It shows us the road to take and the way to go.

II

But in the second place, a road map shows us what is ahead of us. It not only shows us the way to go, but it also tells us what is ahead of us along that way. If the road soon crosses a great river, the map will show that the river is ahead of us. If the road winds up a mountain; if we have to cross a lake; if we are soon to go through a town; if we shortly are to come to a city; if a ferry is needed to get us across a great river or a lake—all of these

things will be pictured there on the map for us, so that we may know exactly what to look for, exactly what is ahead of us. And in the journey of life, the Bible does the same thing for us. It tells us what to look for, what to expect, what is ahead of us. It tells us what we shall find if we follow the map; what mountains of difficulty we shall have to cross; what rivers of disappointment; what valleys of pleasantness we shall go through; what lakes of pleasure we shall come to and what swamps of pain; what towns of trouble and what cities of joy. The Bible tells us exactly what is ahead of us.

III

Again, the road map shows the automobilist his destination. If you are going to a certain town or to a certain city or to a certain lake or mountain, the map will show you just where it is and just how to get to it. The Bible is like that in the journey of life. It will show you just where heaven is, for God's home is the real destination of every true life.

IV

More than that, the road map shows you the best road to take to get to your destination. Sometimes there is more than one road to the same place. If you were going to Utica or Syracuse, the road map would show you that there are several roads you might take to get there. And it will also show you which road is best. For one might be much rougher than another; one might be much shorter than another; one might be much more attractive

than another; one might be a wide, three-lane, concrete highway; another a narrow, winding, country road; one might be torn up for repairs; and another open for traffic. Your map will tell you the difference and show you which road is best. And in the journey of life, the Bible does the same for you. The Bible shows you the best road to heaven, the true destination of the Christian life. Some people get to heaven, who do not go there by the best road. If they would follow the Bible more closely, they might avoid many of the rough roads of life, they might take the shortest and best route.

V

And last of all, the road map shows the traveler, after he has chosen the best road, how to avoid troubles and detours on that road. For even the best of roads may have some bad spots. Often the tourist is sent around a bridge that is washed out, or away from a stretch of road that is impassable. And the road map shows you exactly how to avoid all such difficulties. It shows you where the trouble is, where the bridge is out, where the road is being repaired, where the detours are, and routes you around all these troubles. And so does the Bible. It leads you into ways of pleasantness and into paths of peace. It points out the pitfalls of life and the dangers and the troubles, and routes you around them, or shows you the way to overcome them. It makes your life happy and successful.

The Bible is the road map of life!

CHAPTER LII

COAL AND DIAMONDS

Exodus 39: 8, 10, 11—"And he made the breastplate of cunning work, . . . of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. . . . And they set in it four rows of stones. . . . And the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond."

Objects—A piece of coal and a diamond (one mounted in a ring, either real or artificial, will do very well).

I WANT to speak to the boys and girls this morning on "Coal and Diamonds." The Bible describes the very wonderful breastplate that the High Priest in Old Testament times wore. The description is found in the Book of Exodus and it mentions, among other things, that in the breastplate there was mounted a diamond. Here is how it reads in Exodus 39: 8, 10, 11: "And he made the breastplate of cunning work, . . . of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. . . . And they set in it four rows of stones. . . . And the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond." Four rows of precious stones were set in this magnificent breastplate, made for the High Priest, and one of the stones was a diamond.

Now I have brought to the pulpit today a diamond. It is this brilliant stone set in this gold ring. When the light strikes it, this beautiful stone sends forth flashes

of light of every color of the rainbow; and for this reason it has for thousands of years been considered one of the most wonderful, if not the most wonderful, of all jewels or precious stones. But I have also brought into the pulpit this morning this little piece of coal—black, ugly, dirty. We do not wear coal on our rings or on our breastpins, on our cuff buttons or on our brooches. We think coal is good for nothing but to burn in the furnace and keep the house warm. But did you ever know that coal and diamonds are practically the same thing, chemically? That is, they are both made out of the same thing. They are both chiefly carbon. This beautiful, pure, clear, white stone, brilliant and flashing with the reflected light of the sun and this black, ugly, dirty, dusty piece of coal are both composed chiefly of carbon, a substance or a chemical element, as we learn in school, that is found in nature. God made both the beautiful diamond and the ugly coal out of the selfsame material! Isn't that a wonderful thing; and doesn't that remind us of the wonderful power that is God's? How great and powerful God must be if He can take the stuff that coal is made of and turn it into a diamond!

But God has done it hundreds and hundreds of times. Every time a miner digs up one of these precious stones, he finds something that God has made out of the stuff that coal is made of! But God does other wonderful things every day, too. For every day He is making a beautiful gem out of some unpromising child. Some of us are ugly and disagreeable and without promise. But God can take

us and make out of each of us a thing of beauty and a thing of brilliance—a gem! God can also take a great sadness and make it over into a great joy. God can take a dreary, unpleasant, darksome life and make it into a bright, happy one. And He is doing these things every day, too! Every day He is turning some great grief of some one of His children into a great joy. Every day He is turning the most unpromising person into a character of beauty and power and peace. Every day He is turning a life of dreary sadness into a life of supreme joy and happiness.

And so the question comes up, "Are we letting God *make us* into what He wants us to become?" We cannot do it for ourselves. God can and God must do it for us and with us if it is to be done at all. Coal cannot turn itself into a diamond. But God can! An ugly, disagreeable boy with an ugly, disagreeable disposition cannot turn himself into a character of beauty that is a joy to all who see it. But God can! A girl who is bitter and mean and sneaking and bad cannot turn herself into a character of beauty and spiritual attractiveness. But God can! But we must let Him do it! He wants us for *His jewels!* And while we may be black and ugly and disagreeable like coal, God wants us to be bright and joyful and beautiful like diamonds. And He can do it. Are we letting Him?

Never forget that God wants us for his jewels. He told us so in Malachi 3: 17, "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

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